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Annual report to the Economic and Social Council***

Summary

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) prepares the present report annually to comply with General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in accordance with the request from Member States for greater harmonization and coordination. The report also complies with decision 1995/5 of the Executive Board of UNICEF on the format and content of the annual report to the Economic and Social Council. The report provides information about the direction UNICEF is taking to work in closer partnership with other members of the United Nations system to ensure that development assistance produces sustainable results for children.

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*** The present document was submitted late because of the need for internal consultations.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides information about the direction UNICEF is taking to promote child rights and ensure that sustainable results for children are achieved in closer partnership with other members of the United Nations system, as well as with Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others concerned about the well-being of children.

2. For UNICEF, the best path to achieve the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals, Millennium Declaration, *A World Fit for Children* and national goals lies in working more effectively and efficiently with Governments, United Nations organizations, civil society and many other partners in development. There are clear gains to be made in such collaboration, including for harmonization and greater coherence in United Nations development assistance at country and global levels. This has led to significant results in several areas: For example, the estimated number of children who die before age 5 has declined to 9.7 million. This represents a 60-per cent decrease in the rate of child mortality since 1960. Similarly, a global partnership that was committed to reducing measles deaths by 50 per cent over a six-year period. Recent results showed a 68-per cent reduction globally, and a 91-per cent reduction in sub-Saharan Africa, between 2000 and 2006. Likewise, efforts to end child labour have achieved considerable progress: Child labour was reduced by 11 per cent from 2002 to 2006; the most hazardous forms of child labour were reduced by 26 per cent.

3. Other important gains include a sharp decline in the number of polio cases (since 2002) and an increase in primary school enrolment. There are improvements in breastfeeding practices and access to insecticide-treated nets in malaria-affected areas. Nonetheless, major challenges remain.

4. The impetus for cooperation and collaboration is shown in the "Delivering as One" approach that increasingly characterizes United Nations country team efforts. This past year, the United Nations family collaborated in a more coherent and harmonious way in countries developing new Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). UNICEF is an active, and sometimes lead, partner in these processes, promoting improved results for children. With strong emphasis placed on poverty reduction and achievement of goals for children, UNICEF uses its convening power to ensure that the rights of children and women are reflected in all goal-related actions. Among the 2007 achievements was the collaborative development of a common fund mechanism to mobilize resources for the "One" programme in the eight pilot "Delivering as One" countries.

5. As part of its culture of continuous improvement of its operations, UNICEF initiated reviews of human resources, business processes, supply function, and engagement with partnerships in civil society as well as a broader organizational review. That review identified key shifts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of UNICEF to deliver results for children. The recommended shifts include sharpening programme focus; realigning structures and systems to deliver quality results; strengthening the knowledge base; enhancing work with partners; and providing the needed coordination, support and oversight to foster greater collaboration and coherence.

II. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

A. Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Results of pledging events for 2007 regular resources

6. Combined pledges received during the United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2006 and the eighth UNICEF pledging event held during the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 2007 amounted to $260 million from 49 donor Governments, including both developed and programme countries. During the two pledging events, multi-year pledges were made in the amount of $189 million for the period 2007-2009, with a modest increase in unconditional multi-year pledges for regular resources. Detailed results of pledging events are available in the Executive Board report (E/ICEF/2007/7/Rev.1).

Regular resources income as of September 2007

7. As of September 2007, UNICEF had recorded regular resources income of $533 million from Government donors and intergovernmental agencies against the medium-term financial plan projections of $527 million. Total regular resources income from all sources for 2007 is projected to be $1,053 million, with the level of Government regular resources contributions in line with financial plan estimates. The current ratio of regular to total resources is 30 per cent.

8. The triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) called on donors to increase core and regular funding to operational activities of the United Nations system. Core funding through regular resources allows UNICEF to fulfil both its operational and normative roles, and provides the necessary flexibility to maximize the impact of joint programming and pooled funding arrangements with other United Nations system agencies.

Other resources

9. Contributions to other resources recorded from Governments as of September 2007 were $764 million. Of this amount, $556 million went to other resources-regular (non-emergency), against a financial plan of $352 million, while $208 million went to other resources-emergency, against a financial plan of $371 million. As of 30 September 2007, total income from other resources from all sources was $1,284 million, which was 66 per cent of the plan target of $1,947 million.

10. The projected increase in other resources in 2007 is the result of fundraising efforts for thematic funds. Thematic contributions are funds contributed for priorities of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP), allowing UNICEF discretion in the time frame for spending the funds and in the allocation of funds for specific purposes Characterized by low administrative costs, simplified annual reporting and greater flexibility, such funds respond to programme priorities and allow for longer-term planning and more sustainable results. Thematic funding has also contributed to increased flexibility and predictability of other resources and now represents a significant and growing portion of total funding. Between 2004, when thematic funds were introduced, and 2006, the ratio of thematic to total contributions grew from 8 per cent to 11 per cent, and the amount of thematic

funding more than tripled over the same period (as of 30 September 2007). Since 2003, the total amount of thematic funding received is $1,189 million.

11. Inter-organizational arrangements are another growing resource for UNICEF. These funds are mostly directed to humanitarian responses and include, among other sources, income from various pooled funding mechanisms, such as grants from the United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs Central Emergency Response Fund ($78 million); multi-donor trust fund contributions for the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia ($63.5 million); Iraq trust fund grants ($27 million) and funds from the United Nations Trust Fund on Human Security ($1 million). As of September 2007, $194 million had come from such sources, already exceeding the 2006 total of $178 million. Funding through this category is expected to grow in coming years. To a certain extent, this trend is the result of a shift in the funding approach of some major donors towards more pooled funds. Assessment so far indicates that the process of pooling funds could be further streamlined by moving away from a project-based approach to a more integrated programme approach. This, in turn, would reduce transaction costs, increasing the amount of funds available for assistance.

12. As of September 2007, UNICEF had recorded $398 million in other resources devoted to humanitarian assistance, which represents 31 per cent of total other resources. Through the United Nations humanitarian Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), UNICEF has been relatively successful in mobilizing funding for humanitarian needs. In 2007, 53 per cent of CAP targets were funded. As of September 2007, however, UNICEF had recorded funded levels of only 23 per cent for 'neglected' crises that do not benefit from CAP. Initiatives such as Good Humanitarian Donorship have had a positive effect on funding for humanitarian assistance, but are yet to address the issue of under-funded crises.

13. The 2004 TCPR called for increased predictability of funding for development, including through multi-year contributions. The number and value of such contributions to UNICEF have increased. The predictability of funding, in general, allows strategic priorities to be linked to funding sources. Total future income (unconditional pledges) for 2008-2012 amounts to $442 million: $316 million for other resources and $126 million for regular resources. In addition, the average value of the donor agreements has increased from $1,059 million for each donor agreement in 2006 to $1,177 million in 2007.

14. In the last two years, UNICEF overall income growth has outpaced that of official development assistance (ODA) provided by the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Even after the surge in Indian Ocean tsunami funding in 2005, UNICEF recorded a modest increase of 0.7 per cent in 2006, while ODA recorded a drop of 1.8 per cent (excluding debt relief). OECD/DAC projections for 2007 indicate that ODA will continue to fall. UNICEF expects an overall income increase of about 8 per cent in 2007.

15. UNICEF relies on its partners to provide growth, predictability, stability and reliability of funding to fulfil its mission. The donor community's continued confidence in the work of UNICEF is highly appreciated.

B. Strategic partnerships, including cooperation with the World Bank

16. UNICEF collaborates closely with a wide range of allies in the public and private sectors to accelerate progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other goals for children. These partnerships galvanize commitment and leverage human, technical and financial resources at both the global and country levels.

17. In the area of health, the leaders of eight organizations in health have met to better coordinate and strengthen health systems. This group, includes the World Health Organization (WHO); UNICEF; the United Nations Fund for Population Activities; the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS); the World Bank; the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and the Gates Foundation.

18. Acknowledging the large burden of disease, which poses a barrier to accelerated development in Africa, the African Union Ministers of Health requested UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank to develop an Africa Health Strategy for the strengthening of health systems through improved resources, policies and management. The strategy complements other health strategies and also provides a focus for the convergence of all health initiatives. Such a coordinated response ensures maximum benefit from the resources mobilized and prevents fragmentation and duplication.

19. Through "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS", UNICEF, UNAIDS and partners provide scaled-up support to four interlinked and mutually reinforcing interventions known as "the four P's": prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, treatment of paediatric AIDS, prevention of infection among adolescents and young people, and the protection and support of children affected by HIV/AIDS. By using the four P's, a broad range of actors — including UNAIDS foundations, pharmaceutical companies, donors, researchers and NGOs are being mobilized to achieve gains in each focus area. As a result, many Governments in sub-Saharan Africa are integrating actions to mitigate the impact of AIDS on children into their national policy frameworks. Of note is the steady progress made in Eastern and Southern Africa, home to the majority of new infections in children, where the proportion of pregnant women who are HIV positive and receiving antiretroviral treatment (for prevention of mother-to-child transmission) increased from 11 per cent in 2004 to 31 per cent in 2006. Children infected by HIV have gained greater access to paediatric treatment in the last two years alone. Overall, in middle- and low-income countries, 127, 300 children have been provided with antiretroviral treatment, an increase of almost 80 per cent from the 71,900 figure determined at the end of 2005.

20. The Global Fund is an important partner for UNICEF. UNICEF country offices participate in a Country Coordination Mechanism promoted by the Global Fund. The organization is also very active in supporting procurement activities in several countries in connection to the Global Fund grants activities.

21. UNICEF is the Principal Recipient of Global Fund grants in Somalia and is one of the recipients and partners of the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS in Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Pacific, and the Sudan, and for malaria in Angola.

22. Several partnerships are helping countries to achieve the education-related Millennium Development Goals. One such partnership is the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), coordinated by UNICEF, which is the flagship for girls' education. At country level, the initiative helps to makes country-led efforts more effective by engaging existing mechanisms (such as poverty reduction strategies, and UNDAF frameworks) for education goals. UNICEF is now working with many partners, including with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on child labour, to ensure that various sources of education disparities are identified, quantified and addressed at country level. In addition, UNICEF is a founding partner of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI), which provides resources for the education planning process and reviews the resulting education sector plans in order to bridge funding gaps that remain after national resources and support from in-country donors have been taken into account. UNICEF is the lead coordinating agency in 10 of the 32 countries endorsed so far for EFA-FTI funding support. Through UNGEI, gender and other disparity issues have been mainstreamed in FTI.

23. New partnerships were developed to reach school-age children in emergencies, whether linked to conflicts or natural disasters. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee cluster for education in emergencies, for which UNICEF and Save the Children share the lead, is a good example of joint United Nations-civil society leadership. An Advisory Group has been set up, comprising representative agencies engaged in education in emergencies. Forty countries in emergency or post-crisis situations now benefit from the fund set up through the partnership in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

24. UNICEF continues its work with The Alliance of Youth CEOs, developing a new guidance document on environmental health, which will help youth leaders develop skills to take local action to address the impact of environment problems, including climate change, on children's health. In addition, as part of its partnerships with faith-based organizations, UNICEF continues to work with the Global Network of Religions for Children and World Conference of Religions for Peace to develop a "Toolkit on ethics education for children through interfaith learning" and to initiate work on a study of "Children and world religions".

25. UNICEF is committed to enhanced partnerships as part of humanitarian reform. UNICEF is strongly engaged in the new Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP). Launched by NGOs and heads of United Nations system agencies in July 2006, this forum for strengthening partnership was created to provide a more balanced platform of discussion and collaboration between actors within and outside the United Nations system. UNICEF is supporting the implementation of the GHP "principles of partnerships" in the three pilot countries: Indonesia, Panama and Zimbabwe. UNICEF is also broadening its strategic engagement with humanitarian NGOs, notably through the review of its generic agreement framework for both global and country-level requirements, improvement of its business practices, and promotion of country-level joint planning.

26. In the area of protection of children associated with armed forces and groups, ministerial meetings in Paris in February 2007 and in New York in November 2007 resulted in a commitment by 100 countries to ensure the highest standard of protection for children affected by armed conflict. It

was agreed that a high-level forum among affected countries, donors and international organizations will be established to highlight situations of grave concern and raise resources for this purpose.

27. UNICEF actively supported the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, which was a milestone in child protection. Extensive consultations at the headquarters, regional and field levels in partnership with Governments, NGOs, and other civil society organizations were undertaken to mobilize awareness and action to protect children from violence.

28. A new partnership was formed with Special Olympics International to advocate for and raise awareness of the rights of children with intellectual disabilities. UNICEF also joined UNAIDS in a partnership with the International Cricket Council and used the platforms of the 2007 Cricket World Cup in the West Indies and the 2007 Championships in South Africa for the "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS" initiative. In addition, UNICEF and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) launched Goals for Girls at the 2007 Women's World Cup in Shanghai, China, a campaign that promoted education, gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

29. UNICEF plays a key role in early warning and emergency preparedness activities within the framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and collaborates with a wide range of partners to strengthen common capacity at regional and country levels.

30. In January 2007, the Council of Europe and UNICEF signed a Joint Declaration to reinforce cooperation in policy development and research. UNICEF cooperates with the Council in its three-year programme "Building a Europe for and with Children" in the areas of child rights, violence against children, protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse, juvenile justice and child participation.

UNICEF corporate partnerships

31. UNICEF works closely with private business to identify, design and implement alliances that leverage the strengths of the corporate sector on behalf of the world's children, and encourages companies to adopt socially responsible business practices. Opportunities include efforts driven by multifaceted partnerships, strategic philanthropy, cause-related marketing initiatives, employee-giving programmes, special events, greeting card sales, and support of awareness campaigns and emergency appeals. IKEA partners with UNICEF through integrated approaches to support children and women and their opportunities for learning and development, including through addressing child labour issues. In collaboration with UNICEF, the FTSE Group introduced the first global index series of ethical stocks, FTSE4Good, to monitor private sector environmental sustainability, develop positive relationships with stakeholders, and support universal human rights. UNICEF continues to diversify engagement strategies to work with companies on behalf of children.

Collaboration with the World Bank and other multilateral development institutions

32. UNICEF is expanding its collaboration with multilateral development institutions to leverage resources for children. In 2007, UNICEF partnerships with international financial institutions were further strengthened and resulted in contributions of $27 million, almost four times the 2006 level.

Increasing cooperation with the African Development Bank for education support and reinforced country-level partnerships with the World Bank have been important in this regard.

33. UNICEF and the World Bank are working to further strengthen longstanding collaboration in the areas of social and economic development, and increasing cooperation in humanitarian action and post-conflict situations.

34. Numerous complementarities exist between the areas covered by the UNICEF MTSP and the World Bank's Human Development Network, and there are ongoing policy dialogues in the areas of health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation and child protection. Collaboration in social policy is expanding at global and country levels. Efforts are ongoing to facilitate speedy and efficient collaboration on humanitarian responses and post-conflict situations.

35. During 2007, UNICEF collaborated with the World Bank in organizing two joint global events in New York. One, called "Eyes on the Budget as a Human Rights Instrument", gathered delegates from more than 60 missions to the United Nations and presented country-level examples from Ecuador and the Democratic Republic of Congo to discuss the use of public policies and national budgets as vehicles to investment in children and in realizing their rights The second event, "Eyes on the South as a Knowledge Hub", highlighted how developing countries are a dynamic source of ideas and new knowledge that can benefit developing and developed countries.

36. UNICEF continued to make progress in working with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank for universal birth registration by 2015 in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2015. This has led to the First Latin American Regional Conference on Birth Registration and the Right to Identity, held in Paraguay in August 2007, co-organized by UNICEF, OAS, Plan International and the Government of Paraguay.

37. UNICEF is also strengthening its collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). This cooperation covers a wide range of areas. At the regional level, the Evidence for Action Data Hub in Asia and the Pacific region provides user-friendly, strategic information on HIV and AIDS to policymakers, experts, researchers and programme managers. The project is implemented by UNICEF and UNAIDS in partnership with ADB. UNICEF collaboration with the Bank at the country level covers a wide range of areas, including health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, and protection. UNICEF remains committed to continuing and strengthening this partnership both at regional and country levels.

38. UNICEF also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council of Europe Development Bank to enhance the mobilization and leveraging of resources for children, especially in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Priority areas include young child survival and development, basic education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS and children, and preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse.

C. Capacity development

39. Capacity development and ownership of national development strategies are essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. UNICEF support to national programmes and partner institutions is becoming more upstream, strategic and policy-oriented.

40. Capacity development is viewed as both an outcome and cross-cutting approach in UNICEF-assisted programmes. It remains a common feature of work on child survival, HIV/AIDS, education and child protection and is a growing part of the contribution of UNICEF to policy development at the national level through the sharing of technical experience and expertise.

41. UNICEF contributed to the development of the new inter-agency Common Learning Package on a Human Rights-based Approach to United Nations work at the country level as well as the new United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Policy Position and Toolkit on Capacity Development. In addition, UNICEF will undertake an analysis of its own capacity development approaches to make the necessary adjustments in the next biennium. A focus on capacity development is also reflected in the increased emphasis UNICEF places on the situation assessment and analysis as a contribution to national research and capacity for knowledge-generation on the rights of children and women.

42. Building upon initial lessons from the Accelerated Child Survival and Development programme in West Africa and other large-scale integrated programmes, and following the meeting of all UNICEF Representatives in Africa, which took place in Dakar in November 2006, UNICEF country offices have developed nationally endorsed plans for the following: scaling up work on health-related Millennium Development Goals, including for reduction of child and maternal mortality; expanding the evidence base for integrated community-based programmes; measuring results; and strengthening programme communication and partnerships. Following the All Africa Representatives meeting, more than 40 UNICEF country offices in Africa developed costed scale-up plans together with Governments and key partners. These plans ensure linkages between health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS and water, sanitation and hygiene to contribute to the achievement of all health-related Millennium Development Goals.

43. In the health sector, in partnership with the World Bank and WHO, Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB) was developed to engage all stakeholders in identifying budgeting problems, to propose interventions, and to estimate costs. This method has helped Governments to focus on key interventions related to children, including the allocation of resources. In 2007 a total of 26 countries used the MBB tool for a variety of purposes, from costing National Child Survival Strategies to developing a medium-term expenditure framework, and from needs assessment related to health Millennium Development Goals to developing cost simulations and other budgeting elements of health programmes.

44. Strengthening national technical and technological capacity moved forward on several fronts. Building technical expertise and the use of information technology in national survey work have led to better data collection, including through multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS). Since 1995, when they were first developed to provide critically needed information, these household surveys

have been conducted in 100 countries and territories. The current round, implemented in 2005-2006, provides data from more than 50 countries for 21 of the 53 Millennium Development Goals indicators. The time frame for these surveys has been narrowed from five years to three, to provide more time-sensitive data to guide effective programme planning.

45. DevInfo (originally developed by UNICEF as ChildInfo) is a database system that enables effective management and dissemination of data on human development. Its adaptability has made it an important aspect of capacity-building for data collection and analysis to improve results for children. Countries that adopt DevInfo adapt the database to their own needs and specifications using country-specific branding and packaging options. Since last year, an additional 12 countries have adopted DevInfo, bringing the total number of users to 92 national statistics organizations. More than 20,000 professionals have been trained in the use of DevInfo for improved statistical literacy and database administration, two thirds of them from Governments. DevInfo is distributed royalty-free to all Member States and United Nations system agencies for use on both desktops and the web.

46. For the third consecutive year, the United Nations Statistics Division has adapted *DevInfo* to publish official United Nations data on Millennium Development Goals indicators, known as MDG Info. MDG Info 2007 has been prepared to accompany the Secretary-General's Millennium Development Goals Report 2007, presenting the most up-to-date country-level statistics available in the United Nations as of July 2007 for the global monitoring of progress since 1990 in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

47. Central to achieving positive results for children is the strengthening of the capacity of individuals, groups and organizations to work with the public sector for the reform of national laws and policies on children's rights. One example is policies linked to reducing violence against children. UNICEF is helping to address the dearth of social workers and family services through capacity-building, training and legislative reforms to establish professional social workers organizations and networks.

D. South-South cooperation

48. UNICEF supports South-South cooperation through direct exchanges of information and experience among countries. One expanding area of cooperation involves greater coordination on child protection issues at the municipal level by creating decentralized specialized child rights and child protection councils. Expertise from Latin America and the Caribbean in this area has been offered to countries in other regions. While UNICEF often facilitates the collaboration among countries, the knowledge and experience are provided by jurists, academics and child rights activists themselves.

49. The Government of Brazil, an early leader in the provision of HIV care and treatment to children, has with UNICEF support developed a mechanism to assist and mentor other developing countries. Lacos Sul-Sul, or "South-South Ties", includes Brazil, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste. It involves a common commitment to respond to the HIV epidemic through horizontal exchanges of information and joint elaborations of

strategies. Under Lacos Sul-Sul, Brazilian health personnel, along with UNICEF and UNAIDS, provide medicines, capacity-building, monitoring and other forms of technical assistance. They also mobilize civil society groups around stigma-reduction and HIV prevention and care. All countries where Lacos Sul-Sul has been launched have seen a rapid scale-up of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and HIV treatment services for children as well as adults.

50. The Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health (SEARCH), an NGO based in India's state of Maharashtra, demonstrated that neonatal mortality could be effectively reduced through improved home-based newborn care practices. UNICEF in Eastern and Southern Africa encouraged partners in the area of maternal, newborn and child health to visit SEARCH and the Government's programme on Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Diseases. Subsequently, programme managers in seven countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) and Yemen undertook a two-week orientation session at SEARCH, with each country team developing a plan to introduce home-based newborn care practices in communities in their own countries.

E. Gender mainstreaming

51. There are still major challenges in ensuring that boys and girls have equal access to their rights. Achieving gender equality is essential for the attainment of all the Millennium Development Goals. The UNICEF *State of the World's Children Report 2007* on gender equality heightened advocacy and focused attention on achieving improved gender equality results. Studies on gender issues and better efforts for gender disaggregation in data collection are under way in many countries. For example, the UNICEF-supported study on "Gendering the Tsunami: Women's Experiences from Sri Lanka" revealed the importance of women's entrepreneurial skills for the survival of women and their families following the disaster. UNICEF also supported specific research on gender impacts of new aid modalities with its study on "Gender and equity in Education SWAps in South Asia".

52. Another important partnership is the UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which unites the work of 12 United Nations entities. UN Action aims to improve coordination and accountability, to expand programming and advocacy, and to support national efforts to prevent sexual violence against women and girls and respond to the needs of survivors. An 18-month joint campaign co-led by V-Day (the global movement to end violence against women and girls) and UNICEF was launched in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The campaign aims to raise global awareness and resources to respond to sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo and to mobilize political will to end impunity for such crime. Within the country, efforts to end sexual violence are focusing on scaling up prevention and response, especially by the Government; on changing attitudes, aiming for zero tolerance for sexual violence; and on empowering girls and women both socially and economically.

53. The 2004 TCPR called for stronger commitment and accountability on the part of the United Nations system to achieve gender equality and to further strengthen capacity in mainstreaming gender. UNICEF is supporting a major evaluation of the implementation of its gender policy, to be completed by the end of 2007. The evaluation addresses institutional strengths, weaknesses and good practices

related to gender mainstreaming, including six country studies (Jordan, Mali, Moldova, Nepal, Nicaragua and Uganda). The evaluation's conclusions and recommendations will be shared with the Executive Board at its annual session in June 2008.

54. UNICEF contributes to the UNDG Gender Task Team's efforts to develop tools to strengthen the performance of United Nations country teams (UNCTs) on gender equality. A gender score card has been prepared, comprising a set of indicators that address planning for gender equality, partnerships, UNCT policies and capacities, decision-making, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, quality control, and accountability. Field testing of the score card is under way.

55. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its 2007 session, focused on the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against the girl child. UNICEF worked closely with NGO partners and the Division for the Advancement of Women throughout the session and contributed to the extensive participation of girls.

Gender parity in organizational policy

56. Over the past 15 months UNICEF has made considerable progress in increasing the numbers of women at senior levels. As a result of senior staff appointments, the proportion of International Professional female staff members had reached 48 per cent by November 2007, up from 44 per cent in June 2005. Most of this growth has taken place at the senior most levels, with the proportion of women at the D-2 level growing from 19 per cent in June 2005 to 33 per cent in November of 2007, and at the D-1 level from 33 per cent to 44 per cent. The Gender Parity and Equality Policy and action plan, issued in June 2007, states the organization's commitment to a gender-balanced and gender-friendly workplace that emphasizes a balance between work and personal life.

57. Efforts to increase the retention of women staff members continue. A series of four work-culture forums were held in 2007, providing new input for management leadership training. Gender-based leadership programmes for women and men continue, and graduates of both groups report a strengthening of informal networks and gender perspectives in their leadership. The Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office has successfully piloted a middle-level manager's leadership course, which will now be open to other regions as well.

F. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities for development

58. UNICEF continues to work to implement the recommendations of the 2004 TCPR through its work with the UNDG and in the UNDG Executive Committee. This has involved participation in, and sometimes providing leadership to, working groups at headquarters, regional and country levels. These include groups dealing with the Resident Coordinator system, quality support and assurance of UNDAFs and transition for countries in the post-crisis phase. UNICEF also participates in the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), and its High Level Committees on Management and on Programme. These are critical mechanisms to promote greater coherence throughout the United Nations system, in areas ranging from human resources management, coordination of evaluation policies and practice, to climate change.

59. UNICEF has taken an active role in strengthening the guidelines for the joint programming process, CCAs and UNDAFs and in monitoring and supporting the implementation of joint programmes developed through this process. This collaboration has led to greater coherence and clarity in UNDAF results and a steady increase in the quality of joint programmes.

60. The modified CCA guidelines reflect the importance of a broad analysis of the situation in a country, an analysis that includes inputs from all parts of the United Nations system. UNICEF adds value to this by bringing the human rights and/or gender perspective to the existing analysis, especially focusing on marginalized children. From now on, the Situation Analysis will be a product of UNICEF that contributes to the planning processes of the wider development community. The Situation Analysis in Mozambique, for example, which was conceived as an examination of child poverty, has been used not only by the UNCT but also by the Government and the international community to guide development efforts in the country.

61. UNICEF continues to take part in, and in many cases lead, the introduction of a Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), which streamlines procedures for transferring funds from the United Nations funds and programmes to Government partners. HACT calls for fundamental changes in the way United Nations system agencies work and in their relationship with Government partners. Though these changes are taking longer to implement than anticipated, feedback from country teams suggests that as implementation progresses globally, acceptance increases among Government partners and United Nations system agencies, and the pace of implementation improves. By mid-2007, only 25 countries had fully implemented HACT, but many more are expected to follow by the end of the year.

62. In the effort to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations system, UNICEF has responded strongly to the request of eight Governments to be pilots for "Delivering as One." The central element of this work is to prepare a coherent United Nations programme in support of national development priorities. Rwanda is the only one of the eight pilot countries scheduled to develop its UNDAF during 2007, and, as a result, is the pilot country in which the synergy and coherence of the "One Programme" can most clearly be shown. In other pilot countries, the country teams are working to build coherence by improving the existing UNDAFs. This process is being closely monitored.

63. The pilot countries have also explored ways of increasing coherence in funding, both to reduce competition and increase efficiency in fundraising, and to increase transparency and accountability in the collective United Nations contribution to national development. This has taken the form of a budgetary framework and a common fund. UNICEF has been an active partner in the development of systems and processes for the management of the common fund in the pilot countries. The framework outlines the expected activities in a "One United Nations" programme, and the cost of those activities – and also how much of the required financial resources have already been mobilized. The common fund is set up to fill the funding gap between the already-mobilized and the needed resources to deliver the programme. Mobilization for the fund is a UNCT exercise in which funds are mobilized and allocated according to pre-agreed formulas and processes. Moreover, in the pilot countries, HACT is being adopted by an increasing number of specialized agencies, to ensure the lowest possible overhead expected from Governments in those pilot countries.

64. The eight pilot countries undertook a stock-taking exercise in late 2007 in order to identify progress during the year. The stocktaking had two parts - an overview from the Government, which was sent to the Deputy Secretary-General, and a more detailed listing of accomplishments and challenges prepared by the UNCT in conjunction with the Delivering as One Steering Group in the eight countries. Full-fledged evaluations will be carried out in 2009 (to evaluate the process) and 2011 (to evaluate impact), under the guidance of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

65. An important lesson learned is that the process of increased coherence should be initiated during the programme planning phase, ensuring country leadership and ownership to be emphasized early on. Another lesson is that the extra attention and financial commitments given to the pilot countries require significant staff time for management, which should be incorporated into workplans and budgets.

66. At a global level, a system-wide review of the structure and work of CEB and UNDG identified areas of overlap. This will be addressed through a review of the two current High Level Committees under CEB, and a review of UNDG, which will also become the third High-Level Committee under CEB. UNICEF has been actively engaged in these discussions to ensure that the resulting changes provide enhanced and clearer support to the field, with streamlined and efficient headquarters mechanisms.

67. The Humanitarian Reform agenda focuses on four main strategies, also referred to as "pillars": enhanced leadership, accountability and predictability of emergency response in key gap sectors (clusters); adequate, timely and flexible humanitarian financing Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF); improved humanitarian coordination (strengthened humanitarian coordination); and effective humanitarian partnerships. UNICEF is engaged in each one of these pillars.

68. UNICEF is a global cluster lead organization in Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; co-lead in Education with Save the Children Alliance; lead of the Child Protection sub-cluster under the Protection cluster; and lead of the Data Communications sub-cluster within the Emergency Telecommunications cluster. Tools, guidelines and standards for use by these clusters are being developed and in some cases are being piloted and/or rolled out.

69. UNICEF has made substantial progress in strengthening its decentralized and organization-wide capacity to support clusters (largely through Regional Emergency Advisers and Regional Technical Advisers) and its standby and internal staff rosters. UNICEF instituted a 1-per cent pass-through of global cluster funds to partners for global cluster capacity-building. UNICEF has demonstrated that its own Emergency Programme Funding mechanism complements and strengthens the effectiveness of the Central Emergency Response Fund through its "first-release" capacity, which is then followed-up by CERF and other bilateral funding for "scale-up" of emergency response.

70. Within the context of the humanitarian reform, UNICEF also collaborates on the strengthening of the humanitarian coordinator function which is critical for the success of the reform at country level and proposes candidates for the inter-agency pool for country Humanitarian Coordinators.

Resident Coordinator system

71. There has been a qualitative improvement in the Resident Coordinator system this past year. The Regional Directors Teams (RDTs), which bring together the Regional Directors from the Executive Committee agencies, and several of the specialized agencies working in each region, are now fully functional in all regions. They have assessed the performance of Resident Coordinators, and for the first time, their assessments are being used by the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel, which considers the transfers of Resident Coordinators whose terms in their respective countries have ended. The RDT assessment process now needs to be enhanced by having broader agency representation in deliberations.

72. Ten UNICEF staff members are now serving as Resident Coordinators; four women from UNICEF are either serving as Resident Coordinators or will soon take up a Resident Coordinator position. Of the 10, two staff members are also serving as Humanitarian Coordinators. An additional 14 UNICEF staff members have successfully passed the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre process, 6 of whom are women, and are eligible for positions as Resident Coordinator, Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Common services and simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures and transaction costs and efficiency

73. In the spirit of the TCPR of 2004, the Comptrollers of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme are developing a standard set of financial rules and regulations. Draft financial regulations are nearing completion, and work on harmonizing the financial rules has commenced.

74. In line with these activities, work proceeds on the adoption in 2010 of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, which will further enhance transparency, accountability and governance related to UNICEF resources. In all of these areas, UNICEF works closely with the other parts of the common system through the High Level Committee on Management of CEB.

75. A harmonized format for a results-based biennial support budget has been produced with UNDP and UNFPA. The results-based presentation links the budget more directly to the priorities of MTSP and allocates resources under 16 high-level functions, providing key results and indicators, with baselines and targets. It shifts the focus from the costing of inputs to the costing of results to better indicate organizational performance. The harmonized results-based budget format was presented to the UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards in June 2007. A preliminary draft of the biennial support budget in results-based format was also presented to the UNICEF Executive Board in September 2007. The final proposal for the 2008 support budget will be submitted to the UNICEF Executive Board in January 2008 for review and approval.

76. A review of key business processes, completed in 2007, made a series of recommendations to increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of UNICEF. Steps are under way to improve processes in budgeting, recruiting, travel, procurement and logistics. Some of these include

automating and decentralizing various budget management activities; establishing a web portal so that regional accounting data can be accessed by headquarters; facilitating the access of field staff to policy and process guidelines, through the intranet; and simplifying travel procedures including through collaboration with sister agencies The work being launched on enterprise risk management will also contribute to more streamlined processes based on clear rules and regulations.

G. Evaluation of operational activities

77. In response to an International Peer Review of its evaluation function, UNICEF has prepared a comprehensive Evaluation Policy for consideration by the Executive Board in January 2008. The updated policy takes into consideration the changing international cooperation environment, the recent United Nations Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System, and the findings of the organizational review. UNICEF also conducted an evaluation of its Gender Mainstreaming Policy and of its response to the post-tsunami transition phase in India, Somalia and Thailand. UNICEF participated actively in several inter-agency evaluations: of UNDAF, CERF and the real-time evaluation of the flood emergency response in Pakistan. Along with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the UNICEF Evaluation Office co-chairs the system-wide evaluation of the eight pilots for "Delivering as One". The Evaluation Office also led a performance evaluation of the United Nations Ombudsman Office.

78. UNICEF has chaired the evaluation training working group of UNEG for two years and will continue into early 2008. Based on the competency profiles for United Nations evaluators developed in 2006, UNICEF led the design by UNEG of a Diploma in Evaluation to be offered to United Nations staff and partners by the United Nations System Staff College. The diploma will enable UNEG to give a professional certification to evaluators within the United Nations system. It is expected that this measure will facilitate the implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the harmonization of United Nations system evaluation practices.

79. UNICEF co-sponsored the biennial meetings of the African Evaluation Association in Niger and of the Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Network for Latin America and the Caribbean in Colombia. The organization also contributed as well to the meeting in Moscow of the International Programme Evaluation Network of East European countries.

III. Follow-up to international conferences

Commemorative plenary meeting

80. The year 2007 marked the mid-decade point for the Plan of Action of *A World Fit for Children*. The General Assembly convened a commemorative high-level session from 11 to 13 December on the follow-up of the General Assembly Special Session on Children. The session evaluated progress made on the four key areas of health, education, protection, and HIV/AIDS, and on the goals and strategies that underpin and reinforce the Millennium Declaration and Goals. UNICEF worked closely with the President of the General Assembly and other partners to organize the high-level plenary session as well as two roundtables and numerous side events. More

than 40 delegations included children, several of whom addressed the General Assembly on behalf of their delegations. The event was a milestone in the participation of children - as representatives of all children and as representative of their Governments - and in the attention paid by global leaders to the voices of the young.

81. UNICEF led a systematic review of progress towards the *World Fit for Children* goals, assisted in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on the Special Session's follow-up and produced *Progress for Children*, a statistical review of achievements using the most recent household survey data.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference

82. One issue that children place high on their agenda is climate change. UNICEF participated in the December 2007 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on children. UNICEF released a publication titled *Climate Change and Children*, which discusses the effects of climate change on children's health and development. Many of the main killers of children, including malaria, diarrhoea and malnutrition, are sensitive to global warming. Climate change and children was also the subject of a side event during the General Assembly commemorative session on children hosted by the Government of Greece. UNICEF, along with other agencies, has provided extensive data on energy consumption patterns for New York Headquarters and for staff travel.

83. UNICEF is working with the United Nations Environment Programme, among other partners, and within the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to develop a strategy to promote safe and healthy environments for children. This strategy will focus on measures to prevent and reduce environmental risks to child survival, protection and education, while enhancing the capacities to respond to the needs of children in the event of a humanitarian crisis linked to climate change.

Participation in international treaty implementation on indiscriminate weapons

84. UNICEF is a core member of the United Nations mine action team working to develop a legally binding instrument of international humanitarian law on cluster munitions. The treaty would serve as a critically important safeguard for children, who comprise between one half and two thirds of those wounded or killed by cluster munitions globally.

Incorporation of goals in country development planning

85. By the end of 2006, 50 countries had prepared national plans of action for children, and several of these were prepared with the involvement of children. More than 100 countries have incorporated goals for children in their national plans. Many countries have specific plans for priority areas, including violence against children, sexual exploitation, child labour, AIDS, malaria, and vulnerable children, including orphans.

86. Most national plans of action for children refer to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or to the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State Party reports.

Other human rights instruments, such as ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, are also increasingly recognized as part of the framework of national development. On the other hand, cross-sectoral challenges such as child protection, early childhood development and nutrition are weakly reflected in national development plans.

87. There have been some improvements in the allocation of budgetary resources to services that benefit children in many countries. Aid flows have also improved since the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002, at which developed countries were urged to achieve the target of providing 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for ODA. On a smaller scale, but increasing, is aid from non-governmental sources, estimated in 2005 at around $15 billion. This type of aid tends to be targeted effectively to reach children.

88. Nevertheless, today's flow of aid resources still falls far short of what is needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to finance essential investment in children as anticipated by the outcome of the Special Session. To fill the financing gap for the Millennium Development Goals, total ODA volumes would need to rise from the 2005 level of 0.33 per cent of GNP of wealthy countries to an estimated 0.54 per cent by 2015.

89. Concern that Governments would not reach these targets was raised at the G8 summits in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, in 2006 and in Heiligendamm, Germany, in 2007, and in 2007 by children who held their own Junior 8 Summit (the "J8"). There the young people committed themselves to work for a better world, and urged government leaders to fulfil their promises, old and new. "Together it is possible to make a difference", they said.

IV. Conclusion

90. The journey to 2010 and onward to 2015, the years on which most targets for children converge, will be demanding. In a decade already marked by humanitarian crises and conflicts, the impact of AIDS, growing inequalities and concerns about poverty and climate change, an unprecedented effort is required from Governments and the international community to achieve the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals, Millennium Declaration *A World Fit for Children* and other commitments to children. The progress made is considerable, but significant gaps remain. There must be a collective sense of urgency to meet these goals.

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UNICEF evaluation policy

Summary

This document presents a comprehensive evaluation policy in accordance with Executive Board decision 2006/9 on the evaluation function in UNICEF (E/2006/34/Rev.1).

The purpose of the evaluation policy is to ensure that UNICEF has timely, strategically focused and objective information on the performance of its policies, programmes and initiatives to produce better results for children and women. The policy aims to foster a common institutional understanding of the evaluation function in UNICEF, and further strengthen evidence-based decision-making and advocacy, transparency, coherence and effectiveness.

The paper is organized as follows: Section I presents the introduction; section II provides the background to the policy; section III defines the scope of the policy and guiding principles for the evaluation function in UNICEF; section IV describes the accountability framework for evaluation; section V puts forward measures to strengthen the evaluation system; section VI outlines the collaboration with partners in evaluation; section VII refers to the periodic review of the policy; and section VIII contains a draft decision for consideration by the Executive Board.

* E/ICEF/2008/1.

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I. Introduction

1. During its 2002 annual session, the Executive Board endorsed the report on the evaluation function (E/ICEF/2002/10) in the context of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2002-2005 as "the policy statement on the evaluation function in UNICEF"[1] . At its annual session of 2006, the Executive Board requested the secretariat to prepare a comprehensive evaluation policy for consideration at the annual session in 2007.[2] The Bureau of the Executive Board subsequently agreed to consider the evaluation policy in January 2008.

2. The updated policy provides a common understanding of the evaluation function in UNICEF, taking into account human rights principles, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals, *A World Fit for Children* goals, the MTSP for 2006-2009, coherence of the United Nations system, and the 2007 Organizational Review of UNICEF.

II. Overview

A. Background

3. In June 2004, the Executive Board reviewed the "Progress report on the evaluation function in UNICEF".[3] While it commended UNICEF for the important progress achieved, the Executive Board noted in decision 2004/9 (E/2004/34/Rev.1) that much work remained to be done, including sharpening the strategic focus of evaluation work plans, improving efficiency and raising standards of evaluation work. The Board re-emphasized[4] that the evaluation function should be carried out in consultation with national authorities, in compliance with decision 2002/9. UNICEF was encouraged to further strengthen the evaluation function, highlighting the following: (a) focusing on fewer, high-quality studies, with strong emphasis on analysing effectiveness and results; (b) improving evaluation standards at the country level; (c) accelerating progress towards joint evaluation work; (d) strengthening national evaluation capacity; and (e) identifying best practices and enabling findings to feed systematically into organizational learning.

4. In 2006, a panel of six international experts conducted a peer review[5] of the evaluation function in UNICEF. The findings were presented to the senior management of UNICEF and to an informal meeting of the Executive Board. The panellists concluded that "the central Evaluation Office demonstrated a high level of independence and produced evaluations which are credible and useful for learning and decision-making within the organization. The decentralized evaluation system is appropriate for the operational nature of the organization, but its credibility and usefulness are limited by critical gaps in resources. Before the evaluation function's

[1] Decision 2002/9(E/ICEF/2002/8/Rev.1).
[2] Decision 2006/9 (E/ICEF/2006/5/Rev.1).
[3] Document E/ICEF/2004/11.
[4] See document E/ICEF/2002/8/Rev.1 of 7 June 2002.
[5] The report, Peer Review of Evaluation Function at United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), was published by the Canadian International Development Agency in May 2006. Panellists represented the African Development Bank, the Governments of Canada, Ghana, Ireland and Norway, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

potential to strengthen accountability and organizational learning can be fully realized, some organizational constraints must be addressed." The Peer Review Panel concluded that a clear and comprehensive evaluation policy document consistent with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, more predictable budget for evaluation, additional interventions to strengthen and support field offices, and improved use of results-based management throughout the organization would strengthen the evaluation function.

5. The Executive Board, in decision 2006/9, recalled General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, which emphasizes that national Governments have the primary responsibility for coordinating external assistance and evaluating its contribution to national priorities. The Executive Board called on UNICEF to conduct evaluations of operations at the country level in close association with national Governments and assist Governments in the development of national evaluation capacities, and requested UNICEF to prepare a comprehensive evaluation policy.

6. The new policy contained in the present document complies with the following resolutions and regulations:

(a) General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004, requiring systematic evaluation of operational activities of the United Nations system by assessing their impact on poverty eradication, economic growth and sustainable development of recipient countries. The General Assembly also mandated the United Nations system to promote national ownership and capacity development and to make system-wide progress in harmonizing evaluation practices;

(b) The Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2000/8 of 19 April 2000, Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. Regulation 7.2 of the bulletin states that all activities programmed shall be evaluated over a fixed period of time. Regulation 7.4 indicates that the findings of evaluation shall permit mid-course correction, if required, and be reflected in subsequent programme design and delivery and policy directives;

(c) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System were approved by UNEG in April 2005. In July 2006 at its substantive session, the Economic and Social Council took note of the endorsement of the Norms and Standards for evaluation by UNEG as constituting a contribution to strengthening evaluation as a United Nations system function.[6] UNICEF led the inter-agency drafting process of UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation, and the UNICEF Executive Board took note of the UNEG Norms and Standards in decision 2006/9.

B. Evaluation in the context of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan

7. The MTSP for 2006-2009 (E/ICEF/2005/11) indicates that UNICEF will focus on six main areas in the strengthening of its evaluation function:

[6] In ECOSOC resolution 2006/14, and in compliance with General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review (paragraph 69).

(a) National capacity-building and strengthened national leadership in country-level evaluations;

(b) Strengthened evaluation within the United Nations system and with other partners;

(c) Evaluation in humanitarian crises;

(d) Evaluations related to MTSP focus areas, strategies and operational effectiveness;

(e) Strengthened organizational capacity in evaluation;

(f) Heightened management attention to the evaluation function.

8. The Executive Board, in decision 2006/9, requested UNICEF to focus more intently on evaluating the results of the MTSP, on country programmes and on the humanitarian responses.

9. The MTSP included (in Annex II) an Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF) that details various evaluative exercises required to assess UNICEF performance against the MTSP. The IMEF sets the global evaluation agenda for the MTSP period and is subject to review in the 2008 midterm review of the MTSP. Implementation of the evaluation plan, in many cases, involves partnerships with other United Nations agencies, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

10. From 2008, the Offices of Audit and Evaluation will engage in integrated planning and coordinated joint assessments of organizational performance and programme effectiveness. The joint initiatives will cover relevance and results of UNICEF, its contribution to national development, and the management of UNICEF support. The two offices will cooperate closely on the institutional evaluations of UNICEF in other areas.

11. UNICEF has piloted various forms of country programme evaluation in recent years, evolving from traditional evaluation of the relevance and contribution of UNICEF activities, to evaluation of the contribution of UNICEF together with other partners, and more recently to evaluation of the UNICEF contribution in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and with the evaluation agenda increasingly set by governments. The next generation of evaluations marks the migration from UNICEF-centred to country-led approaches, as exemplified by the evaluation presently piloted by the Government of South Africa with UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, aiming to assess the overall United Nations contribution to national development efforts. In addition, UNICEF is co-chairing the evaluation led by UNEG of the eight "Delivering as One" United Nations pilot countries.

12. UNICEF has developed approaches to evaluating humanitarian action, in order to assess performance against the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies, humanitarian law and human rights principles. UNICEF will continue to use real-time evaluation (RTE) to provide quick feedback on the performance of emergency activities in sudden-onset disasters and for chronic crises in phases of emergency.

III. Scope of the policy

A. Purpose and use of evaluation

13. According to the UNEG Norms for Evaluation,[7] an evaluation is an assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. It aims at determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the interventions and contributions of the organizations of the United Nations system. An evaluation should provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes.

14. Evaluation asks three key questions: Is the right thing being done? Is it being done well? Are there better ways of doing it? The first question is addressed by examining the rationale and relevance of the undertaking; the second by examining the effectiveness of the results achieved and assessing efficiency, with a view towards optimizing the use of resources; and the third by identifying and comparing alternatives, seeking best practices and providing relevant lessons learned.

15. Evaluation should be distinguished from other functions in the oversight spectrum,[8] while recognizing that evaluation findings both draw from and inform the products of the other oversight functions in UNICEF. Evaluation is distinct from inspection, investigation and financial and compliance audit, whereas there are commonalities between evaluation and programme performance audit. Evaluation differs from monitoring, which forms a part of management's accountability for self-assessment and reporting. In UNICEF, evaluation and research are closely related and both contribute to the knowledge agenda outlined in the MTSP and re-emphasized by the 2007 Organizational Review of UNICEF. Research seeks theoretical knowledge, while evaluation tests the achievement, relevance and sustainability of results.

16. In focusing on the substantive rationale, value and performance of programmes, evaluation serves to improve results and stakeholder satisfaction. All evaluations follow the same guiding principles of rigour and transparency, and share the same purpose of organizational learning and accountability. In order for UNICEF to be truly a knowledge-based organization, evaluation must be part of the institutional culture at all levels — corporate, regional, country and local — and be applicable in all contexts, from humanitarian crisis to transition to stable development.

17. At the global level, evaluation serves to assess UNICEF performance against the objectives and targets set in the MTSP. Evaluation is also conducted to analyse the contribution of UNICEF to global strategies in collaboration with key partners, particularly the achievement of the objectives of the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals. When global endeavours are executed with strategic alliances, joint evaluations will inform the partners on performance and lessons to improve the design and enhance effectiveness.

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[7] *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System* endorsed by the UNEG in April 2005.

[8] The current evaluation policy elaborates more specifically on the functions of the oversight function. See document E/ICEF/2002/10.

18. At the regional level, evaluation serves the Regional Management Team and partners in the assessment of regional strategies to help countries to address trans-boundary and shared regional issues and to mutually assist each other in achieving national goals and priorities.

19. A country office, together with a national Government and partners, may commission either independent or participatory evaluation, depending on whether the main purpose is accountability or learning. The Country Representative may commission evaluations in support of national goals and the strategic aims of the programme of cooperation, with evaluation taking various forms, such as:

(a) Retroactive evaluations of an intervention supported by UNICEF, in order to improve design and/or for accountability purposes to stakeholders;

(b) Joint evaluations with partners of a programme or strategy, so that greater effectiveness and efficiency result;

(c) United Nations-wide evaluations of support given to the country to improve inter-agency cooperation to national programmes;

(d) Multi-partite evaluations of themes or policies to improve learning on how to increase intended impacts;

(e) Support to country-led evaluations, for strengthening national evaluation capacities.

20. General Assembly resolution 59/250 stipulates that national Governments have primary responsibility for coordinating external assistance, including assistance from the United Nations system, and for evaluating the impact of contribution to national priorities. In the spirit of this resolution, UNICEF may elect to sponsor evaluations from a country-led perspective by asking a national Government evaluation unit or another established national evaluation entity to conduct evaluations.[9] UNICEF will increasingly be involved in supporting national Governments' evaluation priorities.

B. Guiding principles for the evaluation function

21. The guiding principles of evaluation at UNICEF emanate from decisions taken by the Executive Board and from the UNEG Norms and Standards and Code of Conduct for Evaluation. These are:

(a) Evaluation must respect the principle of universality and country-driven programming (decision 2002/9);

(b) UNICEF is to support programme countries in evaluating their own programmes and to contribute to the strengthening of evaluation capacity in these countries (decisions 2002/9, 2004/9 and 2006/9);

(c) Whenever possible, evaluations must be undertaken in partnership with national authorities, with the United Nations system and with interested partners (decision 2004/9);

[9] In decision 2002/09, the Executive Board requested the secretariat to make greater use of national evaluators when undertaking evaluations at national level.

(d) Evaluations at all levels (whether of strategic governance, global, regional or country programmes, or projects) must serve an explicit management purpose;

(e) It is important to preserve the decentralized nature of the evaluation system in UNICEF (decision 2004/9);

(f) An amount totalling 3 to 5 per cent of programme expenditures will be dedicated to evaluation, studies and research;[10]

(g) Evaluation concerns must be addressed at the design stage of an intervention, with adequate resources set aside (decision 2006/9);

(h) Evaluation must emphasize the analysis of effectiveness and results;

(i) Evaluation must be credible by meeting professional quality standards;

(j) Evaluation must be conducted in an independent, impartial and transparent manner;

(k) Evaluators must have skills in evaluation, together with personal and professional ethics and integrity, and basic skills in human rights and gender equality analysis;

(l) Evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons are made public and disseminated to all stakeholders concerned;

(m) Evaluation must be duly considered, with management responses and action plans made public;

(n) At minimum, the executive summary of the evaluation must be translated into relevant local language(s) and made available to stakeholders;

(o) Evaluation findings of relevance to the Executive Board are to be brought to its attention (decision 2002/9).

22. UNICEF will apply, and advocate for increased, efforts to evaluate the different effects of its work on women, men, boys and girls, in accordance with the UNICEF gender policy and using gender analysis and gender-disaggregated data.

IV. Accountability for evaluation in UNICEF

23. UNICEF conducts evaluations at the following five institutional levels, reflecting the organizational accountability framework: local or project, country programme of cooperation, regional, global strategic, and institutional performance. Evaluation increasingly will be carried out with the United Nations system and other partners, and managers at all levels should seek to maximize opportunities for joint evaluation. Decentralization is a key characteristic of the UNICEF evaluation system: together with programme countries, UNICEF country offices will continue to commission most UNICEF evaluation work.

24. UNICEF Country Representatives are responsible for ensuring that adequate UNICEF resources are dedicated to evaluation, that communication with government officials and other partners facilitates the evaluation process, and that

[10] This principle was set forth in the Executive Directive CF/EXD/1993-006 of 1 June 1993 for funding from both regular and other resources.

evaluation findings inform the decision-making process. Representatives ensure proper planning of evaluation by preparing an Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, annually updated, and by providing quality assurance in the conduct of evaluations according to the norms and standards set by the Evaluation Office. Representatives are also responsible for following up on evaluation recommendations, reporting on the status of the follow-up, ensuring that their annual reports highlight the main evaluation findings, and ensuring that evaluation reports are disseminated and registered in the UNICEF evaluation database. Country Representatives also have a key role in ensuring UNICEF involvement in multi-partite evaluations related to the UNDAF.

25. The evaluation function at the regional level focuses on oversight and strengthening the evaluation capacities of UNICEF offices and their government counterparts through the following: coordination of evaluation capacity-building activities with the Evaluation Office at headquarters; preparation of regional evaluation plans; provision of quality assurance and technical assistance to support evaluation of country programmes and projects; and collaborative relationships sought with national, regional and global institutions and associations in support of evaluation capacity strengthening. Regional Directors commission multi-country thematic evaluations, in accordance with their regional evaluation plans and in consultation with the Regional Management Team. They ensure the contribution of their respective regions to global evaluations and are also responsible for the conduct and oversight of country programme evaluations and real-time evaluations. Regional Directors report annually to the Executive Board on key evaluations and midterm reviews of country programmes in their regions.

26. At headquarters, Directors are responsible for planning and commissioning evaluations of global policies and initiatives for which they are accountable. In the context of the biennial office management plan, they prioritize the evaluations to be done and ensure appropriate funding. When they accept major funding as other resources, they ensure that funds are set aside for evaluation from the outset in order to properly discharge their accountabilities to fund-providers for results and effective performance. Evaluations commissioned by Directors may be conducted with partners, carried out by the Evaluation Office, or contracted to competent external evaluation entities.

27. The Evaluation Office coordinates the evaluation function within UNICEF and conducts independent global evaluations. The Office collaborates with UNICEF partners in multi-partite evaluations and is the focal point of evaluations led externally for UNICEF. Fostering the professionalization of the evaluation function in UNICEF and across the United Nations system, together with UNEG, the Office also promotes capacity development in evaluation in programme countries. Leadership is provided in the development of approaches and methodologies for policy, strategic, thematic, programme, project and institutional evaluations. The findings of evaluations and related studies are given to senior management, with particular attention paid to the relevance of learning for policy development and the improvement of institutional processes. The Office maintains the institutional database of evaluations and promotes its use across the organization in support of knowledge management. Periodic meta-evaluations of the quality and use of evaluations sponsored by UNICEF are made and reports of the findings are shared with senior management and the Executive Board through the biennial report on the evaluation function in UNICEF.

28. In 2002, the Evaluation Committee[11] was created to consider evaluation matters and advise the Executive Director. The Committee reviews UNICEF evaluation reports that have relevance at the global governance level, including country programme evaluations. The Committee, chaired by the Executive Director or a designated Deputy Executive Director, with a secretariat provided by the Evaluation Office, reviews, and can endorse, recommendations contained in evaluation reports and also examines the annual follow-up reports on the implementation of recommendations. The Committee also reviews the work programme of the Evaluation Office and its implementation.

29. The Executive Director ensures compliance with the evaluation policy across the organization, and safeguards the integrity of the evaluation function and its independence. The Executive Director appoints the Director of the Evaluation Office, ensuring that there is no conflict of interest in employment and that the Director has the final say on the contents of all evaluation reports issued by the Evaluation Office. The Executive Director ensures that sufficient resources and capacity for evaluation are provided, and that senior management responds to and utilizes evaluation results. Reports on evaluation to the Executive Board are given in the annual report as well as the biennial reports on the evaluation function.

30. The Executive Board approves the evaluation policy. The Board also endorses the multi-year work programme and budget for global evaluations in the context of the MTSP[12] and in the biennial budget process.

V. Measures to strengthen the evaluation system

31. The peer review of the evaluation function and the Organizational Review both pointed to the need for UNICEF to strengthen its results-based management, if the evaluation function was to better conduct the assessment of results and impacts. In order to provide UNICEF staff with operational guidance for the implementation of the evaluation policy, an Executive Directive will be issued during 2008 setting out the required management measures to strengthen, monitor and utilize evaluation in UNICEF. Measures to be adopted are summarized below.

32. Country Representatives, Regional Directors and, as appropriate Divisional Directors will:

(a) Undertake evaluation in accordance with the principles of evaluation in UNICEF (III B above);

(b) Ensure the evaluability of new programmes and initiatives at the planning stage, including a clear statement of results, the identification of risks, relevant performance indicators, and the setting of baselines at the outset;

(c) Enhance the monitoring of programmes to allow UNICEF to more systematically conduct evidence-based performance and impact evaluations;

(d) Allocate funds at the start of each year for the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan;

[11] See Executive Directive CF/EXD/2002-022 of 10 October 2002.

[12] The new format for results-based budgeting highlights fund allocation for evaluation.

(e) Ensure that all programme staff have a foundational knowledge of evaluation principles and types and their application, and that external evaluators employed by UNICEF have the competencies to ensure that credible evaluations are undertaken;

(f) Make sure that existing staff engaged in evaluation have access to professional development opportunities, and ensure that new appointments to such posts are made against the evaluation competencies agreed by UNEG, while seeking technical clearance from the Regional Office and Evaluation Office, as appropriate;

(g) Institute measures to ensure that evaluations are strategically selected and that all major programme components are evaluated during the programme cycle, allocating adequate resources;

(h) Maintain a level of independence in evaluation by increasing joint evaluation with partners, encouraging country-led evaluations, and ensuring that managers of UNICEF programmes under evaluation do not have decision-making responsibility for evaluation terms of reference, the selection of evaluation consultants, or the acceptance of evaluation reports;

(i) Ensure that evaluation recommendations are fully considered with concerned partners, that accepted recommendations are acted on, and that annual reports include a statement on the status of evaluation follow-up;

(j) Submit completed evaluations to the UNICEF on-line evaluation database, within three months of their completion.

33. The Regional Office will:

(a) Provide support and technical advice to country offices to assist them in fulfilling their obligations under the evaluation policy;

(b) Monitor and report annually to the Executive Board on the quality of evaluation in the region, the appropriateness of staffing and financial resources dedicated to the evaluation in the region, and country arrangements for ensuring independence, transparency and impartiality in country-level evaluation;

(c) Maintain a tracking system for the implementation of any regional evaluations and country evaluations with implications for regional strategies;

(d) Maintain a roster of pre-qualified evaluation consultants and institutes from within the region.

34. The Evaluation Office will:

(a) Develop corporate strategies for the improvement of the evaluation function and issue and update corporate guidance on evaluation practice to cover emerging areas such as upstream policy intervention, partnership, and new global funding arrangements;

(b) Manage the evaluation quality rating process and rate all evaluations within six months of submission;

(c) Report annually to the Evaluation Committee on evaluation quality, and evaluation needs and expenditure across UNICEF;

(d) Provide technical assessment of candidates applying for positions related to evaluation in UNICEF;

(e) Ensure that evaluation staff are aware of relevant UNICEF, UNEG and third-party evaluation training materials and courses;

(f) Maintain a global roster of pre-qualified evaluation consultants and institutes;

(g) Maintain of a network of communication and exchange with evaluation staff, providing them with updates on evaluations findings, events and methodologies;

(h) Track the implementation of accepted evaluation recommendations from global thematic and institutional evaluations, reporting annually on the status of follow-up to the Evaluation Committee.

35. The Evaluation Committee, meeting three times per year, will:

(a) Review and approve the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and maintain its implementation, including adequate resource allocation;

(b) Approve the annual work plan of the Evaluation Office;

(c) Commission and consider follow up reports on specific evaluations;

(d) Receive and consider the report of the Director of Evaluation on the state of the evaluation function in UNICEF, including recommendations for systems strengthening.

36. UNICEF will continue to be an active member of UNEG.[13] In order to strengthen and support the evaluation function at field level, and in the spirit of United Nations coherence, UNICEF will support UNEG to:

(a) Establish joint strategies for national evaluation capacity development and facilitate partnerships and capacity development, including with United Nations regional monitoring and evaluation networks;

(b) Endorse and promote common norms and standards for evaluation, and common positions on objectivity, integrity and the role and function of evaluation;

(c) Promote the professionalization of evaluators within the United Nations system, including the development of a diploma programme in evaluation;

(d) Strengthen the professional and technical competence of evaluation staff and facilitate mutual support and learning through the exchange of evaluation know-how.

37. A concerted effort, beyond the capacity of any one United Nations agency, is needed to improve national evaluation capacity in programme countries. UNICEF will seek to work with UNEG and other partners to establish and implement a common strategy for strengthening evaluation capacity in programme countries.

38. UNICEF will increase progressively the proportion of programme resources allocated to evaluation at all levels and will monitor and report evaluation expenditure by division, region and country, as part of the biennial report on the evaluation function to the Executive Board.

[13] The UNEG mandate and work programme closely comply with General Assembly resolution 59/250, particularly chapter VII addressing system-wide evaluation.

VI. Evaluation with partners

39. The increasing scope of global partnerships highlights the fact that successful interventions require joint ventures. Because of this, new approaches in evaluation need to be developed. UNICEF will need to seize the growing opportunities to participate in multi-partite evaluations, thereby drawing attention to results and impacts for children on the evaluation agendas of other organizations. There is evidence that joint evaluation tends to increase the independence and quality of evaluation, a further reason to promote evaluation with partners.

40. UNICEF will continue to promote partnerships with professional governmental evaluation networks, including UNEG, the Development Assistance Committee (of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Network on Development Evaluation, the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the international financial institutions, and the Evaluation Network of the European Commission. In addition, UNICEF will actively support the formation of global, regional and national professional evaluation organizations and collaborate with them in promoting evaluation capacity at all levels.

41. UNICEF country offices will nurture collaborative relationships with national evaluation institutions and associations. Such partnerships will enhance the relevance, quality and utility of UNICEF evaluation and its contribution to development and humanitarian action. These partnerships are critical in supporting national evaluation capacity strengthening, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/250.

VII. Review of the policy

42. The implementation of the present evaluation policy and the evaluation function will be reviewed periodically to extract lessons and make improvements. The first such review will take place in 2010.

43. The guiding principles for the evaluation function in UNICEF contained in section III B above and the key performance indicators for evaluation contained in the UNICEF MTSP will serve as institutional performance indicators for the review of the policy and its implementation. Key performance indicators will be revised as appropriate in the light of the updated evaluation policy in the course of the midterm review of the MTSP.

VIII. Draft decision

44. It is recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* the document "Evaluation Policy" (E/ICEF/2008/4) as the policy statement on the evaluation system of UNICEF.

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UNICEF Child Protection Strategy

Summary

The Child Protection Strategy defines the contribution of UNICEF to national and international efforts to fulfil children's rights to protection and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, within the context of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2006-2009. The strategy has been developed through intensive consultation with a wide range of key partners and UNICEF staff.

It is recommended that the Executive Board adopt the draft decision in section VII.

I. The strategic aim of child protection

1. Child protection is an issue in every country and a high priority for UNICEF. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international treaties, all children have the right to be protected from harm.

2. Preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse is essential to ensuring children's rights to survival, development and well-being. The vision and approach of UNICEF is to create a protective environment, where girls and boys are free from violence, exploitation, and unnecessary separation from family; and where laws, services, behaviours and practices minimize children's vulnerability, address known risk factors, and strengthen children's own resilience. This approach is human rights-based, and emphasizes prevention as well as the accountability of governments. It enhances aid effectiveness by supporting sustained national capacity for child protection. Finally, it reflects children's own roles and resilience as agents of change and actors in strengthening the protective environment.

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3. Successful child protection begins with prevention. The priority given to education, health and addressing gender discrimination in the Millennium Development Goals and in UNICEF work underpins this preventive strategy, including in emergencies. Child-sensitive approaches to social protection can make a major contribution: the renewed emphasis of UNICEF on policy advocacy, in tandem with its work in child protection, aims to intensify attention paid to children within national social protection systems and among international development actors. National legal frameworks that put an end to impunity and give children access to justice are also essential.

4. Strong child protection provides a bulwark against the web of risks and vulnerabilities underlying many forms of harm and abuse: sexual abuse and exploitation; trafficking; hazardous labour; violence; living or working on the streets; the impact of armed conflict, including children's use by armed forces and groups; harmful practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and child marriage; lack of access to justice; and unnecessary institutionalization, among others. A protective environment for children boosts development progress, and improves the health, education and well-being of children and their evolving capacities to be parents, citizens and productive members of society. Harmful and abusive practices against children, on the other hand, exacerbate poverty, social exclusion and HIV, and increase the likelihood that successive generations will face similar risks. Child protection is thus an integral part of, and a critical UNICEF contribution to, the achievement of the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals.

5. Child protection concerns are global, and transnational: UNICEF will prioritize child protection in all parts of the world, in situations of both crisis and stability.

6. This strategy aims to reduce children's exposure to harm by accelerating actions that strengthen the protective environment for children in all settings. It sets out these accelerating actions in broad and strategic terms. It supports the child protection results currently identified for UNICEF work, and will help to articulate and underpin such results for a decade. The strategy does not set more, new or different goals,[1] targets or indicators for child protection nor, given the scope of child protection, does it detail programmatic guidance. Through identification of strategic actions for enhanced child protection worldwide, UNICEF hopes to influence the approaches of other actors working in child protection, human rights and development, as well as the private sector, in order that our congruent efforts

[1] UNICEF will continue to work towards the key child protection results in the MTSP 2006-2009, which are expressed as follows:

(1) government decisions are influenced by increased awareness of child protection rights and improved data and analysis on child protection;

(2) ensure effective legislative and enforcement systems and improved protection and response capacity to protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse, including exploitative child labour;

(3) better protection of children from the impact of armed conflict and natural disasters (as per the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies);

(4) children are better served by justice systems that ensure greater protection for them as victims, witnesses and offenders;

(5) children and families identified as vulnerable are reached by key community and government services aimed at reducing their marginalization.

have more impact. All programmes and actions for the benefit of children's health, education, participation or for addressing the impact of HIV and AIDS should likewise be designed so as to strengthen protection, and must never undermine it.

7. The strategy builds on the extensive international normative framework for child protection, and on the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children. It emphasizes knowledge management and brokering; addressing social exclusion; integrating child protection into all sectors, including health and education, and into emergency work; capacity-building of governments and other partners; and working 'upstream' to obtain sustained results. In this strategy, UNICEF continues to emphasize the importance of partnerships at all levels, including with children themselves.

8. The strategy's five principal sections are grouped by the main approaches for building a protective environment: (a) strengthening national protection systems, and (b) supporting social change; followed by (c) promoting child protection in conflict and natural disasters. The cross-cutting areas are (d) evidence-building and knowledge management, and (e) convening and catalysing agents of change.

9. In each area, the strategy builds on lessons learned at country level, combining approaches that are already part of child protection guidance with others that represent emerging sound practice. The strategic actions identified respond to:

- The global expectation of UNICEF leadership in child protection.
- The need for broad-based partnerships that can leverage gains in child protection.
- The value of building on previous achievements.
- The need to ensure that the multiple aspects of the protective environment are addressed.
- The potential for contributing to measurable advances in child protection over a 10-year period.
- The need to synergize the work of United Nations agencies to achieve child protection. results, in the spirit of United Nations coherence.

II. Securing the protective environment

10. This section sets out broad and specific strategic actions for strengthening child protection. The Protective Environment Framework (PEF), set out in the 2002 UNICEF Operational Guidance Note, defines eight broad elements that are critical to good protection. These interconnected elements work individually and collectively to strengthen protection and reduce vulnerability. UNICEF work in securing a protective environment, in line with human rights, is oriented towards reducing disparities in access to information, advice and services, whether these disparities are based on geographic or economic obstacles or discrimination based on sex, age, ethnicity or other factors.

The Protective Environment Framework

1. *Governmental commitment to fulfilling protection rights*: includes social welfare policies, adequate budgets, public acknowledgement and ratification of international instruments.

2. *Legislation and enforcement*: includes an adequate legislative framework, its consistent implementation, accountability and a lack of impunity.

3. *Attitudes, traditions, customs, behaviour and practices*: includes social norms and traditions that condemn injurious practices and support those that are protective.

4. *Open discussion, including the engagement of media and civil society*: acknowledges silence as a major impediment to securing government commitment, supporting positive practices and ensuring the involvement of children and families.

5. *Children's life skills, knowledge and participation*: includes children, both girls and boys, as actors in their own protection through use of knowledge of their protection rights and ways of avoiding and responding to risks.

6. *Capacity of those in contact with the child*: includes the knowledge, motivation and support needed by families and by community members, teachers, health and social workers and police, in order to protect children.

7. *Basic and Targeted Services*: includes the basic social services, health and education to which children have the right, without discrimination, and also specific services that help to prevent violence and exploitation, and provide care, support and reintegration assistance in situations of violence, abuse and separation.

8. *Monitoring and oversight*: includes effective systems of monitoring such as data collection, and oversight of trends and responses.

11. These elements together describe National Protection Systems and also Social Change. National Protection Systems comprise elements for which the State bears primary responsibility for action: government commitment, legislation, service provision, monitoring, and building human capacity. Open discussion, social norms and the engagement of children themselves require strong support from communities and civil society, and are addressed here as Social Change. In practice, these approaches are heavily intertwined: Legislation contributes to changes in social norms (for example, in attitudes towards child labour), and regulations and training aiming to reduce violence in schools are more effective when backed by social consensus. Categorizing these approaches helps to communicate the key actions UNICEF can take to support protective social norms and the scale-up of protection capacity, legislation and services to benefit children and families.

II.A. Building national protection systems

12. Child protection systems comprise the set of laws, policies, regulations and services needed across all social sectors — especially social welfare, education,

health, security and justice — to support prevention and response to protection-related risks. These systems are part of social protection, and extend beyond it. At the level of prevention, their aim includes supporting and strengthening families to reduce social exclusion, and to lower the risk of separation, violence and exploitation.

13. Responsibilities are often spread across government agencies, with services delivered by local authorities, non-State providers, and community groups, making coordination between sectors and levels, including routine referral systems, a necessary component of effective child protection systems. Strengthening such systems requires attention to policy reform, institutional capacity development, planning, budgeting, monitoring and information systems. UNICEF is particularly well placed to influence the normative framework pertaining to children, through law reform, policy development and standard-setting initiatives. This upstream approach to child protection draws on the country-level and global experiences and knowledge of UNICEF and others; is consistent with ongoing UNICEF work; and is in line with aid effectiveness and United Nations coherence. Building on the understanding of government accountability for protecting children under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments, the approach aims to assist governments in meeting these responsibilities.

14. The priorities of system-strengthening work will vary. Low-resource countries may concentrate on defining a minimum package of child protection services and laws, and the policies and capacities to support them. Post-crisis countries will focus on re-establishment of rule of law and attention to child protection in various sectors as these are re-invigorated. Middle-income countries are likely to reform and improve existing social and legal systems. Common concerns include addressing gender power imbalances, strengthening coordination between sectors and increasing support through social protection and rule of law initiatives. In every setting, making sure that vulnerable, socially excluded or 'invisible' groups are included within the reach of child protection systems will require special emphasis.

Strategic actions for supporting national child protection systems:

15. **Incorporate child protection into national and decentralized planning processes, including social protection strategies.** This action is in line with the first overarching recommendation of the United Nations Study on Violence against Children. Poverty reduction strategies (PRSs), national development plans, social protection strategies and sector strategic planning in health, education, social welfare and justice provide opportunities to incorporate child protection outcomes and underlying system strengthening. These efforts should aim to secure greater political commitment to social welfare through better understanding of the role that effective protection plays in poverty reduction and national development.

- Identify a minimum package of child protection services and advocate for their inclusion in social protection strategies, in national and sectoral development plans, and in legal reforms.
- Develop and apply an analytic tool for mapping and assessing existing child protection policies, laws and services for adequacy and to identify obstacles and opportunities in implementation, especially in reaching vulnerable or excluded groups.

- Conduct a cost analysis of the provision of child protection services, and advocate for adequate budget allocations.

- Strengthen attention to protection of particularly vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, orphans, ethnic minorities and indigenous groups, and children affected by AIDS.

16. **Ensure that social protection reform contributes to the achievement of child protection outcomes.** The increased emphasis on social protection within international development, including in high HIV prevalence countries, provides an opportunity to emphasize preventive (as well as responsive) child protection services as being central to child-sensitive social protection. These services include parenting education, day care, family support and youth services, social work and alternative care. Recommendation 3 of the Violence Study, which focuses on prevention and on addressing the underlying causes of violence, refers to policies that address poverty and other disparities. UNICEF can also advocate that protection concerns be addressed in the design of cash or in-kind transfers, and use the opportunity to leverage greater support for strengthening of the social welfare sector.

- Support the incorporation of child protection outcomes, and the underlying system-strengthening measures, in all social protection strategies.

- Support increased coverage of social protection, including social welfare services, to reach the most vulnerable children as a priority.

17. **Promote justice for children within the Rule of Law agenda.** Recommendation 9 of the Violence Study stresses the need to improve justice and security sector systems to protect children who come into contact with the law as victims, witnesses and offenders, and to end impunity for crimes against children. There is great scope for broadening our partnerships to harness the work of others around governance, peace and security, and justice sector reform, as well as scaling up the use of our expertise in improving respect for child rights, for example through the legal empowerment and involvement of civil society.

- Promote a common United Nations approach and tools for justice for children, with greater attention given to children in Rule of Law efforts, leveraging the investments of United Nations agencies and other development actors in the justice sector in support of children's issues.

- Improve and disseminate knowledge on issues relating to children in State and non-State justice systems, including diversion and child-sensitive procedures, to inform advocacy, policy positions and programmatic interventions.

- Promote the legal empowerment of children, women and excluded families, and civil society in order to improve their access to justice to redress violation of their rights, helping to break cycles of poverty, violence and exploitation.

18. **Strengthen coordination amongst child protection system actors.** Recommendations 5 and 6 of the Violence Study call for enhancing capacity of those working with children, and strengthening response and reintegration services. Systematic incorporation of child protection concerns within health, education, justice and security sector codes of conduct, professional training, and information and management systems should be areas for future UNICEF work. Coordination between these sectors and the establishment of functioning referral systems are key

to children and families receiving timely, appropriate, accessible and child-friendly services.

- Increase attention to the protection roles and mandates of professionals within the work of UNICEF sectors of education, child survival and HIV. These roles include professional standards, referral mechanisms and coordination at country level, and should be reflected in planning, policy and guidance.
- Strengthen inter-sectoral work among the justice, security and social sectors for support to children in justice processes and reintegrating into society.
- Promote better inter-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination and operational work flows focused on child protection outcomes, at different administrative levels, through innovative methods and UNICEF convening capacity.

19. **Strengthen the social welfare sector.** Strategic approaches to the social welfare sector should focus on policy development, management and oversight capacity, as well as the quality and quantity of human resources, and better monitoring and information systems.

- Support social welfare ministries in assuming an upstream role in the overall national child protection system. This includes support to strengthening capacity in strategic planning and costing of needed services. It also requires advocacy for appropriate budget allocation.
- Support systematic improvements in the quality and use of social work, including its professionalization.
- Promote the development of appropriate regulations and guidelines to improve quality of service provision by non-State actors, as well as government service providers.

20. **Support birth registration.** Birth registration is a human right, and can strengthen children's access to legal protection and basic social services while also improving national data, planning, policy and budgets. It supports the implementation of national legislation on minimum ages, including for child labour, child recruitment and child marriage, and is valuable for tracing efforts when children are separated from their parents. By documenting the relationship between the child, his or her parents and place of birth, registration facilitates the acquisition of nationality by birth or descent, helping to prevent statelessness.

- Work with partners, including international financial institutions (IFIs), governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to strengthen support for birth registration, placing special emphasis on vulnerable and excluded groups.

UNICEF work, lessons learned and challenges

21. In child protection work, UNICEF has increasingly moved towards system-strengthening, including policy and institutional reforms and capacity-building of social welfare ministries and local government, often joining with the World Bank, the European Union and bilateral partners. In several regions, UNICEF helped to ensure that child protection services were integrated into national development plans

and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), and contributed to the reform of juvenile justice systems.

22. Experience at country level shows that a range of entry points can be used to strengthen child protection systems, from alternative approaches to institutional care in CEE/CIS to HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa to commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in East Asia and Latin America.

23. Strengthening national child protection systems as a whole helps to avoid the duplication that often occurs with purely vertical programmes developed in isolation for specific categories of children. It can yield synergies with development partners, in particular those working to improve social protection or strengthen rule of law. Responsive child protection systems should build on the strengths of issue-specific programming by ensuring that specific forms of vulnerability are addressed, including those related to gender, disability, HIV, and indigenous populations, and be able to measure outcomes for different groups.

24. This approach presents some challenges, particularly regarding the roles of ministries and sectors. Social welfare ministries commonly the cornerstone for protection, are generally poorly resourced, often lacking the human resources to carry out even statutory responsibilities. The justice and security sectors tend to give scant attention to children. And despite their important role, the health and education sectors often lack child protection policies, codes of conduct and established procedures.

25. Earmarking funds for child protection within national budgets is an emerging phenomenon. The challenge is to obtain recognition of the importance and the costs of child protection. No less than health or education, this sector needs adequate funding, oversight, measurement and monitoring, with the requisite capacity and policies in place.

26. Strengthening child protection systems is not an end in itself. This systems focus is expected to lead to both incremental and dramatic results in the medium term. As family support services, referral mechanisms, alternative care, justice responses and victim support improve at local level, the proportion of children in residential care or detention should decrease, hazardous child labour should decrease or at minimum be addressed more quickly, and violence against children should decline.

II.B. Supporting social change

27. Better child protection needs social consensus. The Violence Study notes that violence against children is significant in its scale, scope and underreporting, all of which are exacerbated by societal acceptance. Some forms of violence are rooted in discriminatory and unequal societal gender dynamics, and harmful practices can be deeply anchored within societies, making the involvement of all stakeholders in society crucial to bringing about change.

28. In emergencies, disruption of the social fabric undermines protective norms, sharply increasing children's vulnerability to violations of their rights and compounding factors such as displacement and loss of shelter. In communities affected by HIV, discriminatory attitudes and practices aggravate the vulnerability of affected children and their families. Shifts in societal attitudes and behaviours

can be slow, but in some cases gains have been made rapidly: understanding FGM/C as a social convention, for example, provided insights for programming that has led to significant levels of abandonment of the practice in some heavily affected communities. Norms and values also play an important role in the functioning of formal institutions, and civil society and young people can play critical social roles that lead to stronger government accountability.

Strategic actions for supporting social change:

29. **Increase knowledge and data collection.** Since 2003, UNICEF has contributed significantly to advancing understanding of the societal dimension of protection programming. However, much remains to be learned about supporting long-term protection-related social and behavioural change strategies, making further research, data collection and analysis essential.

- Expand academic partnerships to focus on specific challenges that concern social norms and practices harmful to children, particularly to girls.
- Prioritize further disaggregation of data pertaining to protection-related social norms and practices.
- Commission or promote external evaluations of innovative initiatives.
- Conduct pilots and support scaling-up of social and behavioural change initiatives in selected urban, peri-urban and rural communities.

30. **Strengthen the protective role of families.** The Violence Study strongly recommends that governments implement culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive parenting and care-giving programmes to support families in providing a violence-free home. Such programmes should include: (a) increasing the understanding by parents and caregivers of the physical, psychological, sexual and cognitive development of infants, children and young people in the context of social and cultural factors; (b) promoting non-violent relationships and non-violent forms of discipline and problem-solving skills; and (c) addressing gender stereotypes.

- Promote parenting education to encourage alternatives to violence for disciplining children.
- Secure greater access to social protection for vulnerable families.
- Strengthen advocacy on the elimination of violence against women and girls in the home, school, community and society.

31. **Strengthen the protective role of communities.** Communities are primarily a source of protection and solidarity for children. Working at community level is an effective way of promoting social change, notably through non-coercive and non-judgmental approaches that emphasize the fulfilment of human rights and empowerment of girls and women.

- Raise community awareness and stimulate open dialogue on the rights of the child and on practices that result in social exclusion or harm to children.
- Encourage outreach by community members to interconnected social groups to gain the consensus needed for positive change.

- Support/evaluate community-based child protection networks that monitor child rights, promote behaviour change, and provide protection services and support to victims of violence and harmful practices.

32. **Promote meaningful child participation and empowerment.** Engaging children in active dialogue, and promoting respect for their views as established in the Convention on the Rights of the Child is critical for children's empowerment as actors in their own protection and that of their peers. This includes child participation in both formal and informal justice processes.

- Strengthen UNICEF work in education, HIV and adolescence to promote children as agents of change according to their evolving capacity, including through life skills education, prevention of stigma and discrimination, and peer communication.
- Partner with and support civil society networks to promote children's participation and empowerment.
- Promote the legal empowerment of girls, boys and families, including through legal awareness and the provision of legal and paralegal services at community level.

33. **Support public education and social dialogue.** Public awareness campaigns can play a role in reducing the prevalence of unfavourable or discriminatory attitudes, beliefs and harmful practices towards children.

- Develop an approach to communication for social change that encourages the abandonment of harmful or unprotective social practices and norms.
- Encourage opportunities for open dialogue on child protection topics, in schools, institutions and community centres.

UNICEF work, lessons learned and challenges

34. UNICEF contributed strongly to the participatory process of developing the Violence Study, including organizing nine regional consultations with the participation of governments, United Nations agencies, children, NGOs, media and academic research institutions. The main goal was to break the silence surrounding violence against children. UNICEF found remarkable openness to acknowledging the issue of violence, and readiness by governments to undertake significant new studies and surveys. The challenges of poor data, sensitivity and traditions must nonetheless be acknowledged.

35. It is increasingly accepted that the social dynamics of traditional practices, including harmful social norms and social acceptance of violent behaviour towards children, are most likely to change through collective action. UNICEF and partners are applying this collective model to accelerate social transformation at community level, including the empowerment of women and girls and the promotion of gender equality: In addition to a global coordinated strategy for the abandonment of FGM/C in one generation, UNICEF is examining the application of this approach to other marriage-related practices such as child marriage and dowry. The community-level engagement needed for this approach poses short-term challenges to capacity.

II.C. Strengthening child protection in conflict and natural disasters

36. Conflicts and disasters, more common and often more severe as a result of climate change, create new protection risks and worsen existing ones. The strategic actions draw on the protective environment framework and recommendations from the Machel Study Strategic Review of Children in Armed Conflict. The actions are grounded in international humanitarian and human rights law as well as UNICEF emergency experience. Each involves strategy and tool development, training initiatives, new and or strengthened partnerships with national counterparts, international/national organizations, academic and research institutions at global and national levels. All will be implemented through an inter-agency process with a strong link to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) cluster approach and, where appropriate, integrated missions.

37. The Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs), organized around categories of child protection violations, have encouraged rapid, predictable UNICEF response. To limit duplication of effort, reduce stigmatization of targeted children and adolescents and strengthen responses to other important categories of vulnerable children, UNICEF is working to adapt the systems approach to child protection to emergency and transition contexts, for example through mechanisms at camp level that identify any vulnerable children, provide frontline support and referral to a range of support services (psychosocial support, family tracing, access to education). The emphasis is on preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse rather than on particular categories of children. The present strategy complements the CCCs and strengthens coherence and synergies between emergency and non-emergency child protection programming.

Strategic actions for strengthening child protection in conflict and natural disasters:

38. **Build national (and subnational) child protection systems.** In many medium-scale natural disasters or low-intensity armed conflicts, existing child protection systems continue to function to some degree. In rapid-onset emergencies, these systems have often played a crucial role in strong emergency response. Support strategies should take care not to weaken or undermine child protection systems, and where possible to strengthen the capacity of actors with national and subnational child protection responsibility to address the particular protection challenges of emergencies. This may involve supporting social welfare, education, health, law enforcement and justice sectors to address issues such as the identification and provision of support and referral mechanisms for the most vulnerable.

39. Where child protection systems do not exist or have been significantly weakened, external actors should build on positive community mechanisms, working in partnership and strengthening the capacity of local actors, including civil society, in support of child protection rights. Post-emergency situations can offer opportunities to 'build back better', enabling the establishment of a separate juvenile justice system, for example.

- Develop and implement a framework on child protection systems in emergencies and transitions.
- Support the incorporation of child protection emergency preparedness and response planning into national planning mechanisms and help to equip

governments and other actors to identify and respond to new or exacerbated child protection challenges.

- Develop and implement models of community-based child protection systems in emergencies.

40. **Support positive social change.** The Machel Strategic Review identified the need to work with communities, and contribute to public education and social dialogue. The participation and empowerment of girls and boys, including adolescents, in reducing the culture of violence is especially important, and mechanisms that address family and community dynamics that affect a range of reintegration and reconstruction contexts will be identified and promoted.

- Strengthen capacity to promote a culture of peace (such as addressing gang membership, familial and communal violence) including identifying good practice on engaging adolescents, families and communities to address violence, and mobilizing youth for positive social change.

- Develop approaches to better address social change in transition as a result of emergencies, including reintegration and the changing roles of family members, especially children and adolescents, as a result of emergencies.

41. **Update, expand and implement emergency-specific multi-partner guidance and mechanisms.** Multi-partner guidance facilitates effective field cooperation, particularly in emergencies, and the process of developing shared guidance often yields a better product. Multi-partner guidance developed among United Nations agencies, NGOs and inter-governmental organizations includes the IASC guidelines on gender-based violence, and on HIV and AIDS; the Paris Principles; the United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration standards; the Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, the CD-ROM on Child Protection in Emergencies, the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies and other standards in area of landmines, small arms and explosive remnants of war.

- Develop guidance and mechanisms to respond better to child protection concerns during and after natural disasters, and to address emerging issues including justice in emergencies, security sector reform, and children's participation in transitional justice mechanisms.

- Support implementation of IASC and other existing guidance, including new IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings.

- Continue active participation in emergency-specific mechanisms such as arrangements for monitoring and reporting under Security Council resolution 1612.

- Contribute actively to the IASC cluster approach to protection.

- Identify opportunities for training personnel assigned to peace-building operations on relevant child protection standards.

UNICEF work, lessons learned and challenges

42. The CCCs have helped to achieve progress in child protection. UNICEF has also played an active role in developing interagency international standards, tools

and mechanisms, as well as Security Council resolutions. These efforts have strengthened responses in family tracing and in the provision of psychosocial support in natural disasters, as well as for the prevention of recruitment and the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups. The CCCs and common standards have improved UNICEF ability to coordinate and contribute to common strategies with our partners. The protection cluster, where UNICEF is the focal point for child protection, encourages increased cooperation among partners that cover a wide range, beyond traditional child protection actors.

43. There is considerable expertise, guidance and extensive networks for particular issues and categories of children in emergencies, and developing child protection systems in emergencies while continuing to address specific categories of child protection violations will require vision and support. In transition situations, the reconstruction of the social sector may not be seen as a priority. The rights of children can, however, provide common ground for dialogue and the prioritization of children in recovery efforts.

44. Humanitarian reform and the cluster approach provide opportunities for greater coherence among agencies. In this as in all coordination efforts, considerable time and communication are required to achieve a common vision and smooth working arrangements. Protection in natural disasters is an area where greater leadership is needed. UNICEF will work to ensure that child protection concerns are integrated into the work of all clusters. Where integrated missions exist, UNICEF will work to increase ownership and understanding of child protection concerns by the mission leadership, and the reflection of these concerns in the work of mission components.

III. Priority cross-cutting areas

III.A. Evidence-building and knowledge management

45. Improving data collection, analysis and use underpins all areas of UNICEF work. This strategy seeks to strengthen the evidence base on child protection, contribute to other areas of knowledge, and ensure that evidence is used effectively to improve policies, laws and their implementation. Stronger national child protection monitoring and country-level diagnosis will form an important part of these efforts. Stepping up its intellectual leadership in this area, UNICEF will take further steps to promote research, building on the solid foundation provided by the work of the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre and external knowledge partners, and to consolidate, analyse and disseminate information on child protection, both globally and locally.

Strategic actions for strengthening evidence-building and knowledge management:

46. **Strengthen analytical capacities.** UNICEF will strengthen its internal capacities and partnerships, including with academia, to generate, share and utilize high quality knowledge, data and analysis on child protection. Additional support for the capacity of governments, partners and communities to collect, and apply, information tools in child protection is essential.

- Strengthen technical assistance and support to data collection and related capacity through multilateral and bilateral mechanisms.
- Maintain a repository of knowledge, good practices, innovations and lessons learned on child protection and ensure its dissemination.
- Establish communities of practice on child protection issues.

47. **Improve monitoring of child protection issues.** The Violence Study recommends that States "improve data collection and information systems in order to identify vulnerable subgroups, inform policy and track progress towards the goal of preventing violence against children"; the Machel Review similarly stresses the need for global monitoring and reporting systems to provide baseline data. National data collection on child protection should become routine, and should include disaggregation by sex, age and other vulnerability factors, encouraging government accountability for protection results. UNICEF will continue to play a leadership role in global child protection indicator development and will emphasize the link between mechanisms for child rights monitoring and sectoral monitoring of child protection issues.

- Convene partners to achieve consensus on child protection indicators and promote regular local, national and global monitoring.
- Establish regional monitoring mechanisms in partnership with regional bodies and research institutions.
- Strengthen child protection modules of the multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS) and make these routine within MICS and other relevant data-collection exercises.
- For emergency contexts, build consensus, support and implement indicators for standardized assessments of child protection in emergencies and for measuring impact of interventions.
- Integrate, to the extent possible, regular and emergency child protection programme monitoring and reporting, and Security Council resolution 1612 monitoring and reporting mechanisms in emergencies and transition contexts.

48. **Strengthen research and diagnosis of child protection challenges.** Strengthening national child protection capacities requires a sound analysis of child protection risks; of existing policies, structures and services that aim to protect children; and the incorporation of the views of children themselves. Issues that may appear identical from one country to another, such as children living and working on the street, can be driven by vastly different circumstances. Child protection situation analyses can inform the work of UNICEF as well as that of national, United Nations and other development partners. Research on emerging issues that affect child protection needs to be identified and disseminated.

- Improve and standardize child protection evaluation to demonstrate impact and help replicate successful approaches.
- Improve child protection situation analysis to include law and policy review; and gender and political environment analyses.
- Identify, and initiate research into, the main evidence gaps, including: cost-effectiveness of various interventions, costing of child protection, assessment

of child reintegration programmes, longitudinal research, global security agenda and child protection, and child protection and the changing physical environment.

- Convene a high level child protection advisory group to identify and support global, regional and national research needs.
- Consolidate, analyse and disseminate information on child protection in emergencies, and promote further research.

UNICEF work, lessons learned and challenges

49. Scaled-up efforts need to be based on sound evidence, a solid understanding of local and national factors relevant to protection, including gender, and data that inform decisions and support tracking of progress. In child protection, special challenges attach to each of these: data are hard to gather on issues that are illegal, clandestine or sensitive; local social factors are important determinants of protection; and evaluation remains relatively sparse and of variable quality.

50. Since 2002, UNICEF has worked with many partners to introduce standardized common child protection indicators. Partners working on Child Protection Indicator Development and Data Collection include the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Statistics Division, the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, and members of the Inter-agency Coordination Panel on Juvenile Justice.

51. While the identification of child protection indicators and the collection of data have improved significantly since 2002, data collection has proceeded more slowly. Global data are collected by UNICEF on issues measurable through household surveys, including birth registration, child labour, child marriage, FGM/C, child disability and child discipline. Indicators have been agreed, but data are not yet universally available on juvenile justice or formal care, which require national administrative information systems. Global data are not available on violence in schools, small arms and light weapons, and other issues that are exceptionally sensitive or of a criminal nature, such as trafficking and sexual abuse. The DevInfo database management system is being expanded to include child protection data. EPI-Info is being used in several affected countries for surveillance of landmine-related injuries and deaths.

52. Several governments have adopted mandatory data collection procedures, and countries are adding key child protection indicators in national development plans. Data often remain insufficiently disaggregated by some variables, such as disability, leaving policymakers without the information needed to identify and plan appropriate policies and services for those who are most at risk, excluded or under-served.

53. More systematic evaluation of child protection initiatives will improve learning within and beyond UNICEF. Evidence of programme impact is increasingly being captured across different sectors, as the Violence Study has illustrated. UNICEF should do more to seek out and disseminate such evidence and to draw attention to the child protection research agenda.

III.B. Convening and catalysing agents of change

54. UNICEF is expected to take a leadership role on child protection issues. This gives UNICEF a high degree of responsibility to act as an advocate, convener and partner, encouraging and not overshadowing the contributions of others.

55. Child protection interventions can be accelerated and maximized by leveraging the full potential of partnerships with United Nations agencies, IFIs, national Governments, civil society, the private sector and faith-based communities. UNICEF also has a useful catalytic function in brokering the potential assistance and engagement of partners, in both advocacy and support and action on the ground. It is important to emphasize that as UNICEF moves away from issue-based programming, there is still need to harness the energy and advocacy potential of issue-based partnerships. The catalysing and convening action of UNICEF will be enhanced by building and sharing a repository of knowledge, data and analysis on protection issues. New and creative forms of partnership will be explored.

Strategic actions to convene and catalyse change agents:

56. **Promote the development and implementation of common, multi-partner guidance for programmes and advocacy.** UNICEF will pursue existing partnerships and networks to develop common positions and programming approaches, leveraging the programming of partners for better child protection delivery.

- Use current partnership frameworks and convene new ones to develop and support the implementation of common approaches to child protection programming.
- Build on major public and government commitments to specific groups of affected children — such as children orphaned or affected by AIDS, trafficked children or children with disabilities — while encouraging a broader approach to programming.
- Convene and provide leadership around key emergency child protection issues, including the IASC child protection subcluster, psychosocial support, separated children, justice for children, follow-up to the Paris Principles and Commitments, and mine risk education.

57. **Encourage private sector collaboration.** The private sector often plays a critical role in child protection. Building on the success of individual partnerships, a broader dialogue with the private sector will be pursued. Efforts will go towards encouraging corporate social responsibility for child protection goals in both developing and developed countries, and in emergencies.

- Expand dialogue with corporate partners, emphasizing the promotion of good practices, and liaise with other expert partners to identify appropriate actions at global, regional and country levels.

58. **Seek upstream benefits for child protection through partnerships.** Partnerships with bilateral and multilateral organizations, including IFIs, can generate greater investment in sectors with child protection responsibility. UNICEF will work with partners to promote greater strategic support to government agencies responsible for protection, such as social welfare, and to ensure that the importance

of child protection is recognized and systematically addressed in economic development initiatives. As well, UNICEF will support integration of emergency response and preparedness strategies for child protection into national and peace-support operations.

- Review with donors and agency partners the inclusion of child protection within justice, governance, social protection and other categories of support.
- Support the incorporation of child protection priorities in humanitarian reform and peace-building and peace-support operations, including at early stages of mandate development.
- Expand use of cost-benefit analysis to support strategic choices, including with IFIs and the private sector around economic development issues.
- Participate in global child protection learning networks related to both emergency and development contexts.
- Include national emergency preparedness and response capacity in national planning processes — especially in disaster-prone countries, for example, in PRSPs, United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, Common Country Assessments and Country Assistance Frameworks.
- Build engagement with and increase the capacity of peace-keeping troop contributing countries in order that their troops will contribute to a protective environment for children when deployed.

59. **Strengthen advocacy.** UNICEF will promote child protection through advocacy in both developed and developing countries through research and evidence, existing partnerships and new opportunities. Linking programming and advocacy initiatives, or 'upstream' and 'downstream' efforts, can be particularly effective. UNICEF ties with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Offices of the High Commissioners for Human Rights and for Refugees will remain important. Engagement with civil society and young people in these efforts will be a priority.

- Form high-level child protection expert groups to strengthen identification of critical and emerging issues and responses (these could include gang violence, cyberspace depictions of child abuse, and children and migration).
- Develop strategies to support the incorporation of child protection targets on development, human security, rule of law and human rights agendas.
- Work with Parliamentarians to encourage political and legislative attention to child protection concerns.
- Identify and use opportunities to speak out on specific violations of children's protection rights, especially when doing so can help make an immediate difference, or contribute to positive changes in attitudes, practices or policies in the medium or long term.
- Support advocacy on violence against children through chairing an inter-agency group on Violence against Children, and systematic follow-up of recommendations.

- In industrialized countries, build on global initiatives, and the work of National Committees for UNICEF, to advocate for greater attention to child protection.
- Expand teaching initiatives and academic partnerships on child protection.

UNICEF work, lessons learned and challenges

60. The extensive child protection partnerships *at global level* are illustrated in the Strategy Reference Document (the companion background document to the Strategy). Many of these partnerships are also active and effective at regional and national levels, and UNICEF is engaged in thousands of additional partnerships as part of programming and advocacy at country level. More progress can be made in partnerships and advocacy, especially taking into consideration the leadership role of UNICEF in child protection, the opportunities presented by United Nations coherence, the aid effectiveness agenda, and collaboration with both IFIs and private sector bodies.

61. Partnership-building around justice for children is an example of making good use of the environment created by United Nations coherence initiatives. The Secretary-General's Rule of Law Reports and related decisions identify UNICEF as lead agency for juvenile justice, enabling the organization to convene a process with other agencies to develop a United Nations-wide approach to justice for children. This goes beyond 'children in conflict with the law' to look more broadly at the treatment of children within the law enforcement and justice sectors. This approach should ultimately enhance attention paid to children across all United Nations-supported rule of law work and on the broader agendas of governance, security and justice sector reform, areas in which justice for children can easily be integrated.

62. Understanding Children's Work (UCW) is a partnership among UNICEF, the World Bank and ILO/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. The UCW joint research programme has produced reports on the linkages among education, health and child labour and has begun to engage in advocacy. Nevertheless, progress is yet to be made in introducing child labour into priority areas, such as the economic and social development work of the World Bank or the social protection aims of the ILO.

63. UNICEF has a long history of engagement with the private sector for child protection, including on broad-based campaigns and Codes of Conduct. There are promising examples of reducing and eliminating the use of children in manufacturing, agriculture and extractive industries, children's sexual exploitation in connection with travel and tourism, and in the sale of child abuse images. In many cases, companies have taken initiatives to prevent the exploitation of children in their own sectors, and have been influential in the formulation of public policy as lobbyists, advocates and advertisers.

64. Advocacy around child protection issues in industrialized countries has been increasingly taken up by National Committees for UNICEF — nearly always through partnership with other national civil society organizations — on issues ranging from child trafficking (United Kingdom Committee) to FGM/C (Switzerland Committee).

65. The role of young people in protection advocacy is becoming more evident and more visible. Adolescents who face acute protection challenges have been

highly effective advocates on violence against children and the impact of armed conflict, and in breaking the silence on subjects considered sensitive.

IV. Leveraging results through the strategic use of resources

66. UNICEF will intensify its efforts to increase the knowledge and awareness of all staff members regarding child protection; to further strengthen the skills of child protection staff; and to deploy staff for greatest impact. Work with partners will also be strengthened to leverage the greatest impact from financial resources. UNICEF will promote codes of conduct or ethical standards for human resources and business practices that reflect child protection principles.

67. **Staffing.** UNICEF child protection costs reflect little direct implementation/service delivery, and almost no supplies, working mainly through capacity development, technical support, policy advocacy, liaison and alliance-building. This labour-intensive and interactive work requires highly qualified staff. In the absence of sufficient child protection staff with the required skills, child protection objectives cannot be met.

68. Child protection staff traditionally have backgrounds in law, social work and advocacy, and also need sound political judgment and analytical skills. Strengths in social policy, behavioural sciences and social change, organizational development, and networking and coordination are increasingly important. Country Representatives and staff in other sectors also require the skills to build child protection into the full range of UNICEF programming and advocacy.

69. In strengthening staffing at country, regional and headquarters levels, staff time for effectively maintaining the many child protection partnerships should be taken into account.

Strategic Action

- Undertake strategic human resources planning to integrate these capacities into recruitment and training.
- Design a corporate learning strategy for non-protection staff.

70. **Funding.** Support for longer-term strategies in support of systems-strengthening and social change remains a challenge. Funding for child protection in countries giving it low priority has also been a challenge. Strategies should be developed to strengthen support for child protection initiatives.

Strategic Action

- Undertake review of how best to leverage additional resources for child protection through governments, the private sector, United Nations and IFI partners, and other UNICEF priority areas.
- Convene annual meetings of the Child Protection Donor Group.

71. **Applying child protection principles to practice.** Child protection principles must also be reflected in UNICEF human resources and business practices, and extended to the wider United Nations family. In recent years, UNICEF committed to a "zero tolerance" policy towards the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, or

any other form of child abuse or exploitation by its staff or those directly affiliated with the organization. In addition, the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse established a code of conduct for all United Nations staff.

Strategic Action

- Reflect the UNICEF zero tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse of children through the inclusion of the policy's provisions in the contracts of UNICEF staff, UNICEF partners and UNICEF vendors.
- Review human resource and business practices with respect to strengthening protection against other forms of child exploitation and abuse.

V. Tracking progress

72. Indicators of child protection outcomes are tracked within the MTSP. In addition to this results-monitoring, UNICEF is working to broaden tracking to include critical indicators not currently in wide use, and measurements of the coherence of government efforts to improve child protection. UNICEF proposes the following measures and milestones for 2010:

- A biannual review of child protection progress, accompanied by a dedicated report on the State of Child Protection, beginning with a leadership forum/high level review of child protection progress.
- A review of child protection policies and procedures in selected national health and education systems.
- The tracking of official development assistance related to child protection.
- The establishment of global baselines in juvenile justice and alternative care.
- Review of the evaluability of programme outcomes in UNICEF-supported child protection programmes.

VI. Conclusion

73. Safety and support should be the norm for all children everywhere. Governments have made extensive commitments to prevent children from being exploited and abused, and to respond effectively when they are. Even as countries post impressive gains in child survival and in education, however, full child protection remains elusive, in developed and developing countries alike.

74. Over the past decade, child protection has risen higher on the UNICEF agenda and that of the international community. There is broad recognition of the fact that children in both developed and developing countries face protection risks, and of the cross-border nature of many protection issues. There is also greater recognition of the linkages between improved child protection and sustainable achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As this strategy helps illustrate, there are abundant opportunities to strengthen attention to child protection in national development plans, within rule of law and other sector-strengthening efforts, to make social protection a reality, and to improve humanitarian response. The ability of UNICEF

to use these opportunities will depend on building the evidence base, scrutinizing and applying lessons learned by all child protection and development actors, taking leadership on knowledge management and strengthening and making effective use of partnerships.

VII. Draft decision

75. It is recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board

Endorses the "UNICEF Child Protection Strategy" (E/ICEF/2008/5) as the UNICEF strategy document for programmes and actions in support of Child Protection.